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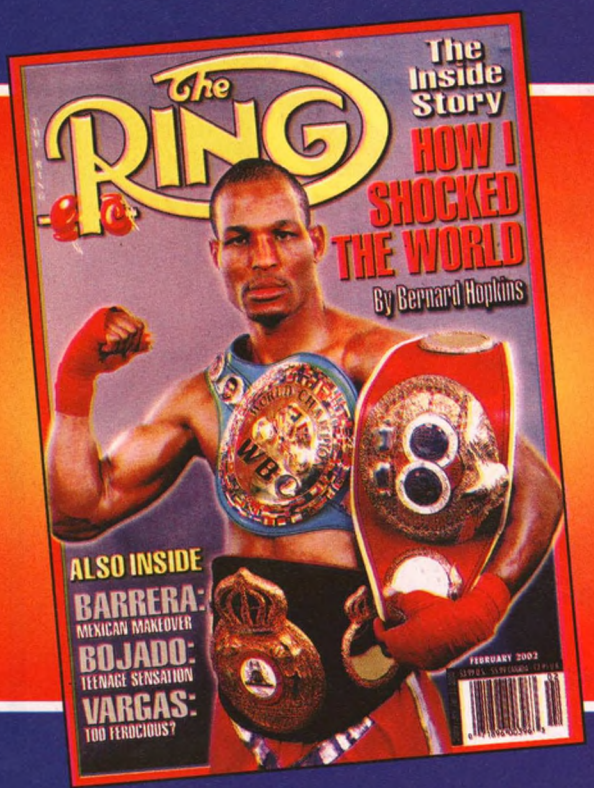

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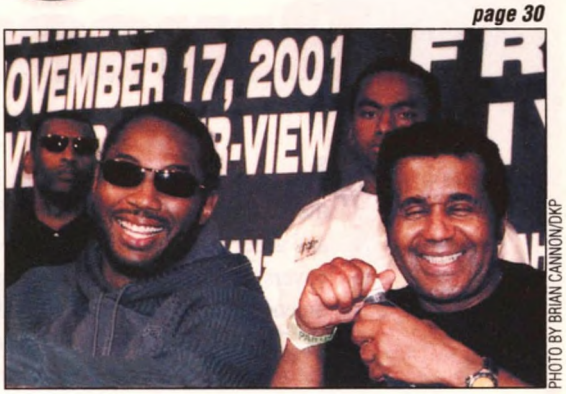

PHOTO BY BRIAN CANNON/DKP

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Joe Kalman

RINGSIDE

I have always felt that the role of THE RING should go beyond the straightforward reportage of the news. Unlike newspapers and other media outlets, THE RING is an advocate of the sport it covers, and as such has a responsibility to try to steer the Sweet Science in a direction that will benefit boxing.

This philosophy is nothing new. Founder Nat Fleischer used the pages of the magazine to promote fair play, especially for minority boxers at a time when the so-called "color line" was still being drawn. It was also under Fleischer's guidance that the then-revolutionary concept of ranking boxers was introduced.

In more recent years, subsequent editors have continued in Fleischer's crusading footsteps, battling the alphabet organizations, fending off attacks from the American Medical Association, and lobbying for stricter health and safety standards.

Now the time has come to take another step that we hope will help lead to a brighter future for boxing—"THE RING's New Championship Policy" *(page 20)*.

Many of today's fans grew up in the era of split titles, and have never experienced the sport the way it's supposed to be. When I first fell in love with boxing as a boy, Rocky Marciano was the heavyweight champion of the world, no alphabet appellation necessary. But as the years went by, I was sickened as the various alphabet organizations sunk their fangs into the sport and slowly began to suck the lifeblood out of it.

Of the numerous evils these parasites have inflicted on boxing, the most damaging has been the Balkanization of world titles. As many astute observers have noted, as there is only *one* world, there can only be *one* world champion.

Sadly, the way things are today, many fans, not to mention much of the media, have absolutely no clue as to who are the real world champions. And that's not surprising when you consider the fact that there are so many claims and counterclaims coming from various alphabet titlists.

The recent trend of title unification is encouraging, but it has been a mere spit in an ocean of confusion. Boxing needs well-defined champions in every weight class to prosper, and that's where THE RING's new championship policy comes into play. All the details are spelled out in the aforementioned feature story, but starting with this issue, we clearly differentiate between world champions and alphabet beltholders.

It's going to take a while for everybody to catch on, but I predict that in the near future, whenever anybody is in doubt and wants to know whom the real champions are, they will turn to THE RING. Or take a look at the belt a fighter is wearing, because if he's the genuine article, the strap around his waist will have the ultimate seal of approval embossed on it—THE RING logo.

***

I was at the Roseland Ballroom the night James Butler sucker punched Richard Grant after the decision in Grant's favor was announced. Like everybody else who witnessed the cowardly sneak-attack, I was appalled. But what saddened me the most was that it sullied what is, for me, one of boxing's finest moments—the customary postfight handshake and/or embrace. The sportsmanship the vast majority of boxers show after trying to knock each other's heads off has always struck me as a wondrous peek into the hearts and souls of the brave individuals who compete. What a shame that Butler's soul turned out to be so twisted.

Nigel Collins
Editor-in-Chief

Volume 81, No. 5 **April 2002**

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ROUND ONE

THE ULTIMATE SORE LOSER

On a fight card designed to pay tribute to those who exemplify the definitions of honor and courage, with all of the proceeds from DiBella Entertainment's November 23 "Fighting For America" show at Manhattan's Roseland Ballroom going to the Twin Towers Fund, super middleweight contender James Butler capped the night by pulling one of the most dishonorable and cowardly acts ever seen in a boxing ring. Butler, who calls himself "The Harlem Hammer," may have hammered the final nail into his once-promising boxing career by following a disappointing performance in his bout with Richard Grant with a disgusting attack on Grant at the conclusion of the fight.

PHOTOS BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

The police come to take Butler away

Grant is attended to after Butler's cowardly attack

Butler's career was already on shaky ground due to his unimpressive effort in losing a unanimous decision to IBF titleholder Sven Ottke in Germany 10 weeks earlier, but it sunk further when Grant, a journeyman whom Butler was supposed to defeat easily to avenge a 1997 loss in a four-rounder, outworked him over 10 rounds. Still, the fight wasn't easy to score because Butler's rare but forceful powershots left several rounds subject to debate, and he seemed to believe his strong finish had snagged him the win. But the judges scored unanimously for Grant, 96-94 and 97-93 (twice), and Butler didn't exactly take it in stride.

With the ESPN2 *Friday Night Fights* crew in the process of signing off, Grant approached Butler in the center of the ring and extended his right hand in a show of sportsmanship. Butler then extended his own right hand, but there was nothing sportsmanlike about his intentions. The hard-punching Butler, with only his hand wraps on his fists, cracked Grant on the jaw with a vicious right, sending the semi-conscious winner melting to the canvas.

"That is assault! He should be arrested on the spot!" screamed indignant FNF blow-by-blow man Bob Papa. "James Butler should be taken out of here in handcuffs ... The Harlem Hammer should be in the slammer tonight."

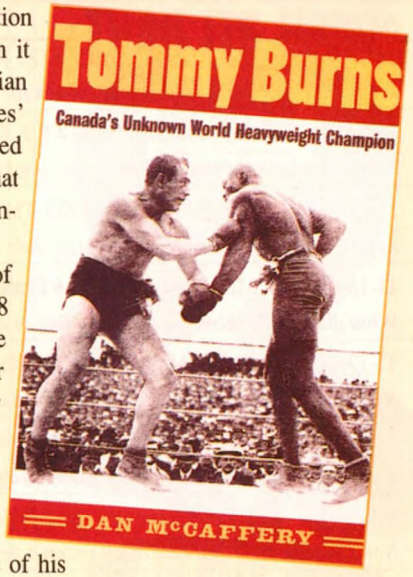
With the crowd, including roughly 500 police officers and firefighters who were invited to the benefit show, chanting "Lock him up!" Butler was led from the ring by the authorities, arrested on second-degree assault charges, and released on his own recognizance the following day. He could serve up to seven years if convicted. There will also be a commission hearing (no date had been set as of our press deadline) where the possibility of revoking Butler's boxing license for life will be considered.

Meanwhile, Grant, who spent five minutes face down, convulsing, with blood from his mouth forming a nasty pool on the canvas, was not as badly injured as it initially appeared. He did not suffer a broken jaw, and the heavy bleeding was due to a large cut on his tongue. But the relatively minor injuries don't make Butler's actions any less appalling.

"The chance to throw punches was in the prior 10 rounds," said Papa's equally irate broadcast partner, Teddy Atlas, "not now when the man was defenseless."

—Eric Raskin

THE BOXING BOOKSHELF

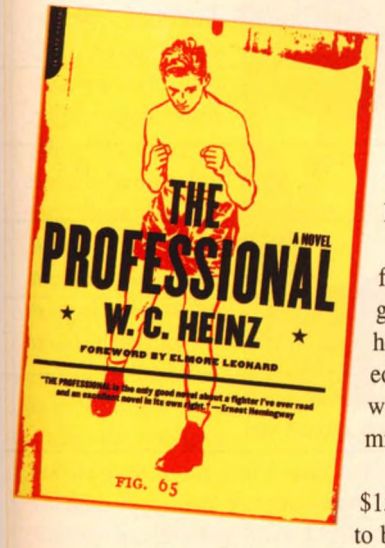


When they were preparing the Tunney-Muldoon heavyweight title trophy for dedication at Madison Square Garden in 1929, word went out that the list of titlists engraved on it didn't include Tommy Burns. The reason given was that the 5'7", 170-pound Canadian who beat Marvin Hart for grudging recognition as champion in 1906, after Jim Jeffries' retirement, just didn't measure up physically or any other way to the others who followed John L. Sullivan on the throne. Burns' protest of his omission was vigorous enough that when the trophy was unveiled on April 17, his name was on it, and he was even in attendance.

Now the revisionist pendulum swings in the opposite direction with the publication of *Tommy Burns: Canada's Unknown Heavyweight Champion* (James Lorimer & Co., 268 pages, hardcover, $29.95), in which Canadian writer Dan McCaffery argues that the boxer born Noah Brusso was actually "one of the best *pound-for-pound* boxers who ever lived" (McCaffery's emphasis), but whose achievements and proper place in history have been devalued by a conspiracy of white racists and jingoistic Americans.

That's a stretch guaranteed to give most ring historians whiplash, but without endorsing all of his conclusions, one can at least acknowledge that McCaffery shines an overdue spotlight on one of our least known and appreciated champions, and even manages to convincingly debunk a few myths about Burns. For instance, that because of his race, Jack Johnson had to chase Burns all over the globe before finally cornering him in Sydney, Australia, for a title fight on December 26, 1908. Unlike the champions who preceded him, Burns not only refused to draw the color line where his opponents were concerned, but was a pioneer of integration in professional sports.

The book's occasional excesses (ranking Burns ahead of Ezzard Charles!), self-contradictions (McCaffery says Burns wasn't dominated by Johnson and appears to hint that he may have even been jobbed out of the title, but then quotes Burns himself on the "terrible beating" he took), and mistakes (calling welterweight champion Joe Walcott a middleweight, and lightweight titlist Battling Nelson a light heavyweight) are jarring but not fatal. McCaffery has produced a business-like Great White North call-to-arms on behalf of a native son who was probably better than he got credit for, even if not as stellar as McCaffery would have us think. It proves at the very least that Burns' name belonged on the trophy that was, in the words of William Muldoon himself, "emblematic of the heavyweight championship because heavyweight champions generally are looked upon by the public as champions in every sense of the word."



When it was first reissued 27 years after its original publication in 1958, *The Professional*, W.C. Heinz' novel that follows middleweight contender Eddie Brown, his manager, "Doc" Carroll, and an assortment of other riveting, finely drawn characters in the training camp where Brown prepares for his shot at the championship, received a second raft of rave reviews seconding Ernest Hemingway's unprompted assessment of the book as "the only good novel about a fighter I've ever read." But the experience was ruined for Heinz, a fervent perfectionist where his own work is concerned, by the artwork on the cover.

"In the text there are two brief but accurate descriptions of the proper bandaging of a fighter's hands," Heinz said. "On the cover they've got some amateur kid, probably hoping to get into the sub-novice class in the Golden Gloves, doing his hands with dirty gym bandages he probably picked up off the floor, and knotting them. This they did to a book that is dedicated to professionalism. When the publishers sent me the jacket proof, I called them and said I would pay for a new painting showing hands properly wrapped and also showing the torso of a middleweight, not a light heavyweight. They said it was too late. Dreadful."

Now comes a brand new edition of *The Professional* (Da Capo Press, 334 pages, softcover, $15), with a loud yellow and red cover featuring a drawing of a boxer generic-looking enough to be Eddie Brown, which at first glance is as startling in its own way as some of the costumes affected by fighters nowadays. But absolutely nothing has changed inside, and while the rest of the list composed in THE RING seven years ago of "The 10 Greatest Boxing Novels Of All-Time" could now stand some revision, the page-for-page champion remains this stunningly artful primer on boxing, human nature and relations, the media, and, most of all, how great literature is written.

Elmore Leonard's foreword to the new edition gilds the lily that couldn't be defaced even if Joe Grim was on the cover.

—Pete Ehrmann

TV FIGHTS OF THE MONTH

DATE	WINNER/LOSER	NETWORK	DIVISION	SIGNIFICANCE	MATCHUP	RESULT
11-16-01	DaVarryl Williamson KO 3 Andre Kopilov	ESPN2	h	C-	B-	B-
A 40-pound weight advantage not enough for painfully rigid Kopilov						
11-16-01	Tokunbo Olajide KO 4 R.J. Karsten	ESPN2	m	C+	C+	C+
Olajide looks like a potential titlist, but would it kill him to hold his hands up on occasion?						
11-16-01	Drexie Frank James KO 1 Michael Bennett	ESPN2	c	C	B-	C+
Apparently, move from heavy to cruiser didn't improve Bennett's chin any						
11-16-01	**Manuel Medina KO 6 Frankie Toledo**	**ESPN2**	**IBF f**	**A-**	**B+**	**C+**
What did Toledo think the ref was going to do when he said he couldn't see? Disqualify Medina?						
11-17-01	Christy Martin W 10 Lisa Holewyne	PPV	w	C	C-	B-
Martin still the best female fighter there is, but Holewyne hung tough until the end						
11-17-01	**William Joppy W 12 Howard Eastman**	**PPV**	**WBA m**	**B+**	**B**	**B**
Eastman more than just a funky goatee; Joppy, down in 12th, barely escaped with win						
11-17-01	Sergei Liakhovich W 12 Friday Ahunanya	PPV	h	C+	B+	C+
Not a terrible fight, but how did it get on a heavyweight championship pay-per-view card?						
11-17-01	**Lennox Lewis KO 4 Hasim Rahman**	**PPV**	**WBC/IBF h**	**A+**	**A-**	**B+**
Gee, with that innovative arms-straight-out defense Rahman was using, we can't believe he got nailed like that						
11-23-01	Clarence Vinson W 6 Jhovanny Collado	ESPN2	b	C	C+	C
You get the sense there are not a lot of easy fights in Vinson's future; think Eric Griffin						
11-23-01	Jermain Taylor KO 4 Undra White	ESPN2	m	C+	C-	C-
Time to step up Taylor's comp level a little						
11-23-01	Richard Grant W 10 James Butler	ESPN2	sm	C+	C	D
Come on, you had to know that someday, sooner or later, that would happen						
11-30-01	Julian Wheeler W 12 Efren Hinojosa	ESPN2	l	B-	B+	B
It's always fun to watch an underdog with no punch at all win on skill and guts						
11-30-01	**Eric Lucas KO 8 Dingaan Thobela**	**ESPN2**	**WBC sm**	**B+**	**B**	**D+**
Proof that the super middleweight division should be abolished						
12-1-01	Hercules Kyvelos KO 4 Michael Covington	Show	w	C+	C-	C
Kyvelos proves little with win; Covington the picture of a shot fighter						
12-1-01	Tim Williamson KO 4 Andrew Greeley	Show	c	C-	B+	D
Alleged shoulder injury brings end to what may have developed into interesting fight						
12-1-01	Fres Oquendo KO 3 David Izon	HBO	h	B+	B+	B-
Excellent win for Oquendo, who may be the division's most improved prospect						
12-1-01	Jameel McCline W 12 Lance Whitaker	HBO	h	B+	A-	C+
The Goossens had to love this						
12-2-01	Alejandro Gonzalez W 10 Orlando Salido	Uni	l	B-	C-	B-
Judges like Gonzalez' aggression and pop over Salido's speed and defense; good fight						

Category Explanation: "Significance"—The importance of the bout to the division and the fighters' futures; "Matchup"—The quality of the fighters and the prefight determination of how their styles will mesh; "Result"—How the bout turned out, from the viewer's perspective.

(World title fights in **bold** type)

Division key: h—heavyweight; c—cruiserweight; lh—light heavyweight; sm—super middleweight; m—middleweight; jm—junior middleweight; w—welterweight; jw—junior welterweight; l—lightweight; jl—junior lightweight; f—featherweight; jf—junior featherweight; b—bantamweight; jb—junior bantamweight; fl—flyweight; jfl—junior flyweight; s—strawweight

Network key: PPV—Pay-Per-View; Show—Showtime; FOXSN—Fox SportsNet; Uni—Univision; Tel—Telemundo

BOXING'S VETERANS FIGHT BACK

The New York and New Jersey boxing community responded to the September 11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center with a fundraiser at Gleason's Gym on November 7. The event—"Counterpunch: An Evening of Legendary Boxing"—was organized by *ShoBox* analyst Steve Farhood and Gleason's owner Bruce Silverglade.

PHOTOS BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Jose Torres takes a fall against Carlos Ortiz

"We felt an obligation to do something," said Silverglade, whose gym lost two New York firefighters in the tragedy. "The response from the boxing community was overwhelming."

The evening featured retired fighters in two- and three-round exhibitions. The lineup included some of the metropolitan area's top names of the last 50 years. Hall of Famers Carlos Ortiz and Jose Torres boxed. Bobby Czyz finally got his rematch with Mustafa Hamsho, and fiftysomething former heavyweight contenders Chuck Wepner and Randy Neumann squared off for the fourth time. The exhibitions were relatively tame and the mood was light and fun, at least until the fighters were asked why they were there.

Iran Barkley, Arthur Mercante Jr., and Gerry Cooney all chipped in

"I was so hurt by what happened in our city," said Emile Griffith, the former welterweight and middleweight champion. "So many innocent people lost their lives. And for what? It just makes me very sad. This was the least we could do to help."

Vito Antuofermo opened the show by pulling double duty, going two rounds against Jake Rodriguez and two more with Michael Olajide. The other matches were Griffith-Vince Shomo, Lonnie Bradley-Bobby Cassidy Sr., Bradley-Mark Breland, Gerry Cooney-David Sears, and Cooney-Iran Barkley.

The event raised $50,000, all of which was donated to the Twin Towers Fund, established by New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani to assist the families of the uniformed services of New York City who lost their lives because of the tragedies of September 11.

—Bobby Cassidy Jr.

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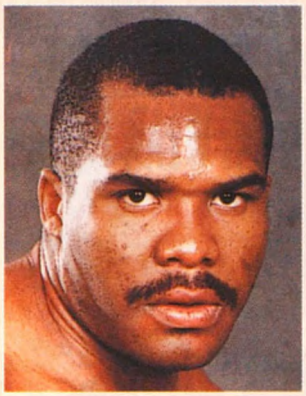
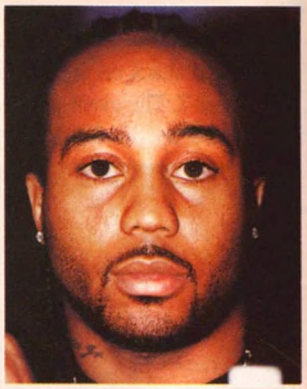


Ibeabuchi: Formally serving jail time

After spending more than two years in custody awaiting a determination on whether he was competent to stand trial for sexual assault, former heavyweight contender **Ike Ibeabuchi** finally agreed to a plea bargain in mid-November. He could get between five and 30 years in prison, minus the time he has already served since his July '99 arrest ... A couple of splits to report surrounding the **Lennox Lewis-Hasim Rahman** rematch on November 17. Prior to the fight, Lewis parted ways with longtime manager **Frank Maloney**, and conflicting reports from the two sides left it unclear what the exact circumstances were. All that is definite is that it's not an amicable break. Also, Rahman fired trainer **Adrian Davis** shortly after the fight, stating that they were barely speaking to each other in the final two months of training camp ... While still in prison for domestic assault, former 130-pound titleholder **Diego Corrales** signed a management contract in mid-November with **James Prince**, the manager of Corrales' conqueror, **Floyd Mayweather**. Corrales is expected to be released from jail in May '02 ... Former welterweight titlist **James Page** failed to appear for a mid-November court date for a charge on possession of a controlled substance, and as a result, a warrant has been issued for the fighter's arrest ... 2000 U.S. Olympian **Ricardo Williams** went in for a routine physical exam in late-November and was found to have a hole in his retina. The problem is less severe than a detached retina, but it still requires surgery and is expected to keep "Slick Ricky" out of action until March ... Congratulations to occasional RING correspondent and Philadelphia *Daily News* boxing scribe **Bernard Fernandez**, who was voted in as the new president of the Boxing Writers Association of America. His term began January 1 ...



Williams: Dealing with retina problem

Paul Chavez, a promoter, manager, and trainer best known for his former association with **Johnny Tapia**, died of cancer in mid-November. He was 78 ... **Joe T. Barrientes**, a trainer who worked with titleholders **Steve Cruz**, **Gene Hatcher**, **Donald Curry**, and **Troy Dorsey**, died recently of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease at the age of 75 ... Texas heavyweight **"Cowboy" Calvin Lampkin** died in late-October of cardiac arrest during surgery for lung cancer. Lampkin, 32, last fought in December '99, losing a decision to **Wolfgramm**. The only other losses on his 19-3 (11) record were both against Ibeabuchi ... Lastly, an in-ring tragedy to report: Indonesian fighter **Donny Maramis**, just 19, died one day after being knocked unconscious by opponent **Stenly Katalo**. WBC President **Jose Sulaiman** pledged shortly thereafter to look into the safety regulations in Indonesia, where there have been a handful of deaths in recent years.

THE PUNCHLINES

"If Oquendo can pull off this incredible feat, don't be surprised to see his promoter, America Presents, change its name to America Fresents!"

—America Presents publicist Fred Sternburg, prior to heavyweight Fres Oquendo's attempt to score his third victory of the year over an alphabet top-10 fighter by beating David Izon

"How can you waste 11 pages on the most uncouth, belligerent sociopath that the boxing world has seen in years? Zab Judah makes Mike Tyson look like a choirboy."

—*Sports Illustrated* reader Richard D. Ashmore, complaining to the magazine about their story on Judah prior to his fight with Kostya Tszyu

AL KRATZER'S VIEW

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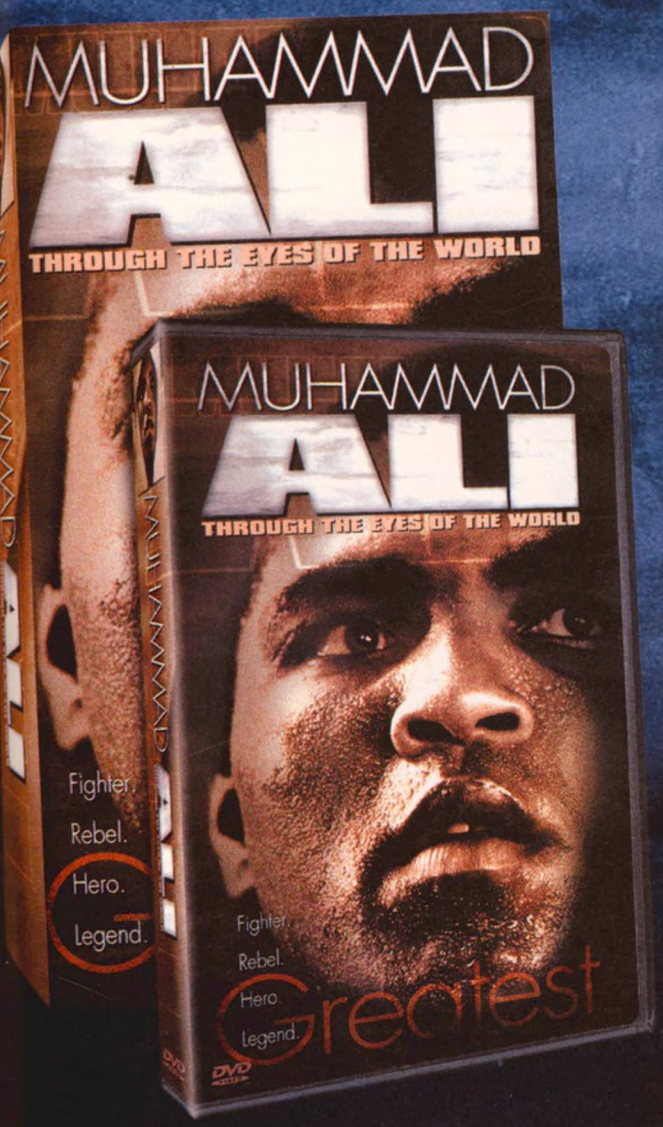

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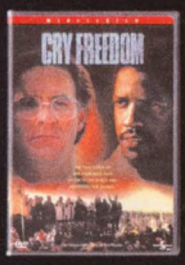

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DREAMWORKS HOME ENTERTAINMENT

CAMERA CLICKS

PHOTO BY BRIAN CANNON/DKP

Mia St. John shows off the noose she'd be hanging herself with if she were stupid enough to get into the ring with Christy Martin. Even when St. John was undefeated, a fight with "The Coal Miner's Daughter" would have been a gross mismatch, but now that she's been flattened by journeywoman Rolanda Andrews, a St. John vs. Martin fight has all the intrigue of a Duke vs. Yale basketball game.

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

The one good thing to come out of Richie Kiley's November fight with Brian Adams is that the Irish-American lightweight didn't have to worry about being unable to get any quality shut-eye that night. The next day, Kiley got together with Omar Sheika, and the two of them put their heads together and tried to guess how far away assorted objects were.

PHOTO BY SUMIO YAMADA

Okay, maybe in these tough economic times not every promoter can afford to hire the world's sexiest round card girls, but has it really come to this? Let's just hope this photo doesn't inspire Brian Nielsen to learn how to walk in heels.

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

There's bad form and then there's bad form. Bobby Czyz, with his hands down and his head turned away, spars with Mustafa Hamsho, who's totally off-balance as he leads with his gut. At least the ex-champs were looking ridiculous for a good cause, helping out at the November 7 benefit for the Twin Towers Fund.

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

In the same ring where James "The Harlem Hammer" Butler would later show himself to be one of the biggest asses in boxing, this round card girl reminds us that not all asses are bad.

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Almost forgotten in the wake of what happened in New York on September 11 is what happened in Washington, D.C., that same day, so D.C.-area bantamweight Clarence Vinson paid tribute to his local firefighters when he fought on Lou DiBella's benefit show on November 23. One conflagration the D.C. Fire and EMS unit probably won't have to worry about is Vinson's career, which isn't exactly showing signs of heating up at the moment.

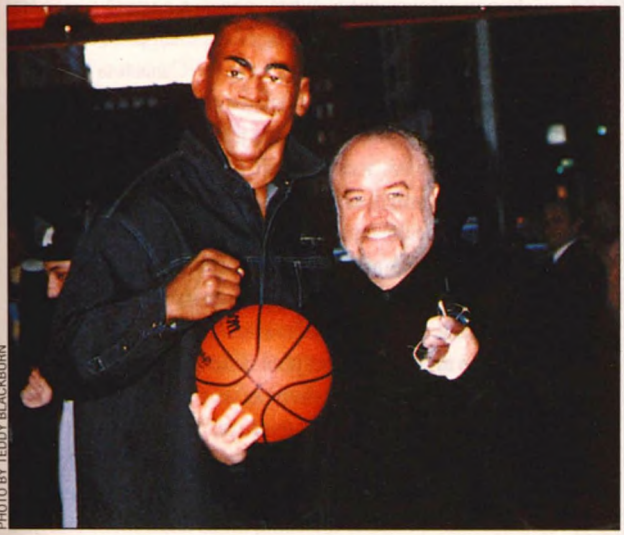
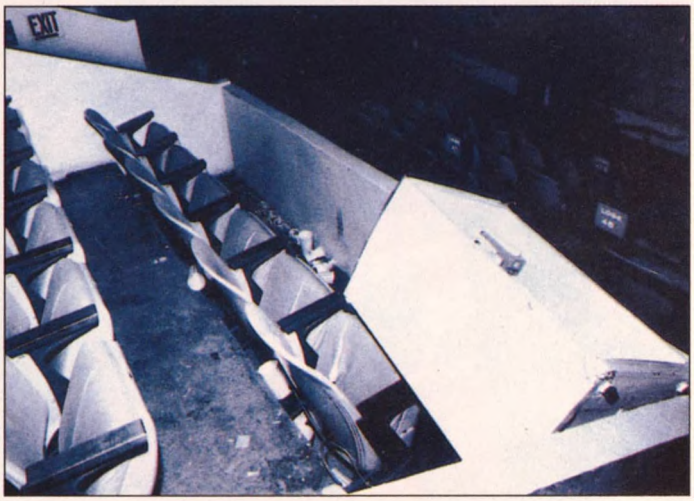


PHOTO BY TEDDY BLACKBURN

Air GOOFi: Heavyweight Lance Whitaker, along with manager Rock Newman, tries on a Michael Jordan mask. Unfortunately for Whitaker, his first fight as "GOOFi" went even worse than Jordan's comeback, from Whitaker's ridiculous ring entrance to his upset defeat at the hands of Jameel McCline. GOOFi, who embarrassed himself on every level, might want to keep that mask on for a while now.

NOSTALGIA CORNER



The Ring doesn't endorse postfight rioting, but we have to admit this one's kind of funny. After the Ismael Laguna-Ramon Blancos bout at Madison Square Garden in 1968, fans who were incensed that Laguna got the decision littered the stands with cups, food, and, believe it or not, a refrigerator.

RYAN OUT LOUD

By Jeff Ryan

COMING APART AT THE HASIMS

This is nothing personal against Lennox Lewis. He's a pretty friendly guy, he doesn't get arrested or accused of some indiscretion every other week, he's fun to watch when his right hand is on its game, he doesn't talk about eating anyone's kids, he can get off a good one-liner now and then ("Has Been Rahman; I changed his name"), and he looks even cooler in shades than Jack Nicholson. So why does the Briton's regaining of the linear heavyweight crown make me want to hock my laptop, fill out an application at the nearest Burger King, and start holding the pickle and holding the lettuce for a living?

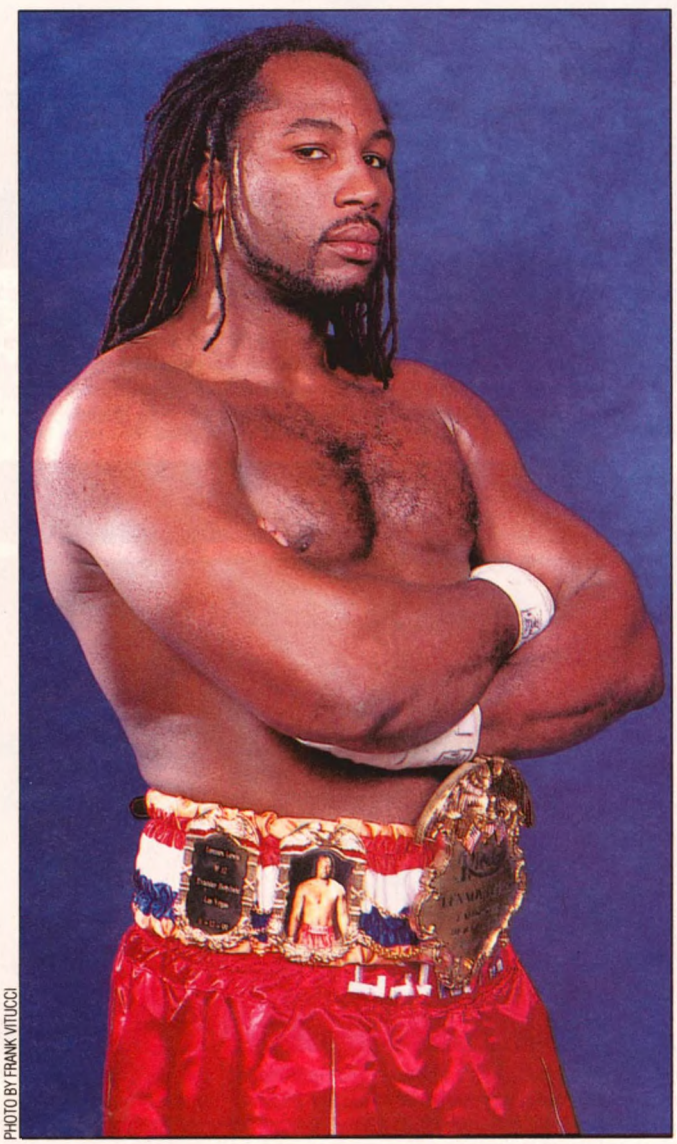


PHOTO BY FRANK VITUCCI

Is anyone excited about Lewis' new reign?

Maybe it has to do with my fear of being asked to make sense of Lewis yet again, to try and figure out how the historians will remember him, and why he has been so consistently inconsistent. Listen, that column topic has been officially retired, and is as likely to make a comeback as John L. Sullivan. Because, frankly, I'm not smart enough to explain how a guy can look so promising early on, get upset and see his stock drop faster than Brian Nielsen skydiving, regain his lofty status by winning the linear crown, get starched by a 20-1 underdog, then resurrect himself once more, this time at age 36.

For goodness sake, what, can we expect next? Immortality or immobility? Acting like a champion or championing his acting? Does Lewis long for Canastota? Or a can of soda? Sorry, but trying to get inside his head is more difficult than trying to get inside his jab.

Hate to throw water on all the Lewis fans out there (although that might not be a bad way of sobering you guys up), but despite the return of your hero *and* his killer instinct, I don't get tingly at the thought of what the heavyweight ranks might offer in the next year or so. The pay-per-view talking heads and sports radio know-it-alls make it sound as though the division's talent pool is deep. The truth, however, is that boxing's "glamour division" is a halfway house full of losers getting their second, third, or fourth chances. Those without experience in tarnishing their reputations, breaking their fans' hearts, and driving their managers to the liquor cabinet need not bother knocking on its door.

Let's face it, for some of us who weren't teetering with a beer in our hands and singing *God Save The Queen*, Hasim Rahman's fall against Lewis was a crushing disappointment. It not only assured that Rahman's title reign will forever be mentioned in the same breath as those of Buster

Douglas and Leon Spinks, but it also ousted from the throne a guy whose act hadn't yet worn thin, whose lines were freshly delivered, and who seemed refreshingly anxious to turn things upside-down. Call me a man who doesn't appreciate fine Lennox, if you'd like, but another reign of Mr. Lewis just doesn't get my blood a-pumpin' and my heart a-racin.'

Perhaps that's because Lewis' inconsistency can be maddening. Or because no heavyweight king, not him nor anyone else, would have a lot of entertaining options available to him right now. No sooner had "The Rock" been beaten down to a pebble, then speculation started over what would come next. If the public has its way, that will be a Lewis-Mike Tyson showdown. Apparently, there are quite a few folks out there who feel Tyson deserves one more crack at wearing the belts, padding his bank account, and being the hero to an entire culture of wannabe gangstas. Never mind that the 35-year-old ex-champ doesn't seem up to the task or even real anxious to pursue it. (Following his knockout of Nielsen, "Leg-Iron Mike" said he still needed two more tuneups. And he was right. The Nielsen bout was the rusty and declining Tyson's first fight in a year.)

If promoter Don King has *his* way, the winner of Evander Holyfield-John Ruiz III (a bout that was ready to unfold as we went to press) would meet Rahman, with the survivor of those encounters getting a crack at Lewis. In other words, we'd eventually pay $49.95 on pay-per-view for a) Lewis-Ruiz I, b) Lewis-Rahman III, or c) Lewis-Holyfield III. The more I think about it, the more I'm convinced I'd prefer d) none of the above.

If—perish the thought—the boxing writers have their way, Lewis and Wladimir Klitschko will end up trading punches with each other for real and not for reel (as they did in the remake of *Ocean's Eleven*). If not Lewis-Klitschko, then Lewis-Kirk Johnson would be intriguing. The problem, though, is that Klitschko and Johnson are hardly sure bets to give Lewis trouble. Klitschko has never shown that he can take a wallop from someone as big and powerful as Lewis. And the Ukrainian hasn't been forced to make adjustments during the heat of battle, something that usually comes about as easily to stand-up European fighters as slam dunks do to jockeys. As for Johnson, well, questions about everything from his defense to the quality of his opposition remain.

Look out at the heavyweight landscape. It's littered with the bodies of men who would be king, but somehow managed to screw up on their way to the gates of the kingdom: David Tua, Ike Ibeabuchi, Andrew Golota, Oleg Maskaev, Michael Grant. Roy Jones never did come up and Riddick Bowe never did come back. No, we'll never see another Muhammad Ali in our lifetime, but, geez, there hasn't even been a "next" Larry Holmes.

If the division is in such good shape, why were some reporters concluding that Oliver McCall's 10th-round undercard stoppage of Henry Akinwande (now there are two names that will live in heavyweight infamy) will earn McCall a—*gulp!*—title shot. Yep, that would be Lewis-McCall III. Eight years after their initial meeting. How timely.

After Lewis kayoed Rahman, the HBO Pay-Per-View broadcast team also mentioned Chris Byrd as a potential challenger. Yeah, now there's a fight we'd really like to see. Aware of Lewis' howitzer right hand, Byrd would be on his bicycle so much that he'd qualify for the Tour de France. That fight would be a real test of endurance. The viewers' endurance, that is.

With the exception of Klitschko or Johnson winning the linear belt, there doesn't seem to be a scenario in here anywhere that gets me enthused. I'm thoroughly Tysoned out. Holyfield even being allowed in the ring worries me. Ruiz stinks. The thought of McCall back in the picture makes *me* have a breakdown and cry. And only Byrdbrains would want a guy who hits like Lennox Lewis replaced by one who hits like Shari Lewis.

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

When Rahman went down, so did Ryan's enthusiasm

When Ali was 36, he was fat, out of gas, and losing to a kid with only seven fights worth of experience. When Holmes was 36, he was surrendering the heavyweight title to a light heavyweight. When Lewis was 36, he was regaining the crown, exacting revenge, and doing it by flattening a dangerous rival in highlight-film fashion. So perhaps my apathy toward the Briton's latest reign should be accompanied by a sense of guilt.

Should be, but isn't. For in my mind, Lewis bouncing on and off the throne is too indicative of how ordinary my favorite weight class has become. Those British fans have something to drink to, but my glass is empty and likely to stay that way for a while. ■

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/DIRECTV

Tua was one of many who has disappointed versus Lewis

NEW FACES

KERMIT CINTRON

Welterweight

By Leonard N. Fleming

PRO RECORD

2000		
Oct. 7	Jesse Williams, Lancaster, PA	KO 2
Oct. 19	Lawrence Brooks, Harrisburg, PA	KO 1
Nov. 21	Danny Rodriguez, Scranton, PA	KO 4
2001		
Jan. 12	Wilson Silver, Philadelphia	KO 1
Jan. 19	Vernon Meeks, Virginia Beach, VA	KO 1
Feb. 9	George Turner, Reading, PA	KO 1
March 15	Kareem Whitehurst, Allentown, PA	KO 1
March 29	Genaro Andujar, Philadelphia	KO 1
April 28	Leroy Brown, Pottstown, PA	KO 2
May 31	Leon Pierson, Harrisburg	W 6
Aug. 18	Said Ouali, Uncasville, CT	KO 5
Sept. 25	Andre Baker, Reading	KO 4

FIGHTS	WON	LOST	DRAW	KOs
12	12	0	0	11

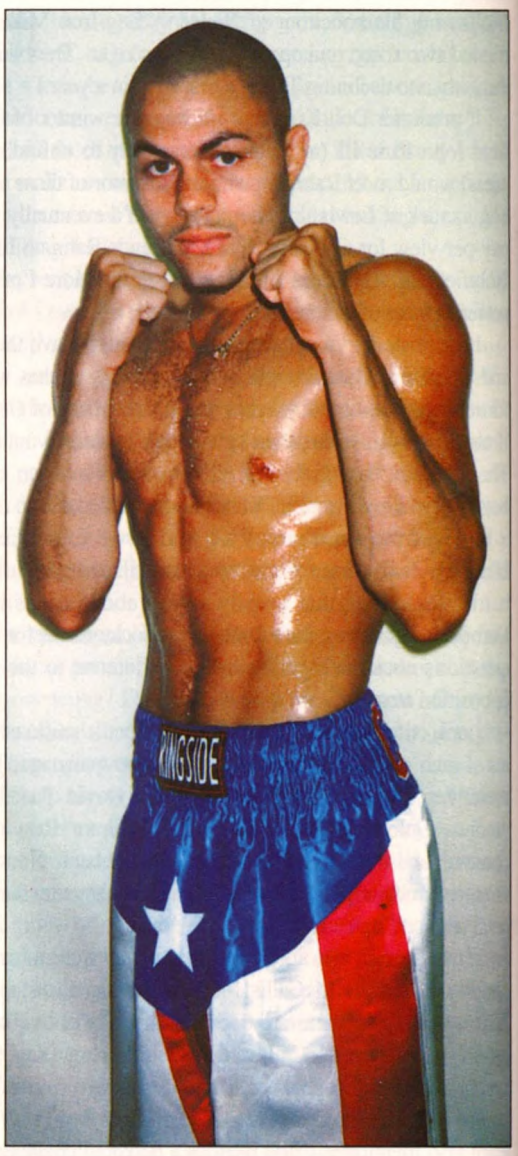
In person, Kermit "Killer" Cintron is shy and soft spoken, a man of very few words. Looking at him, you have to wonder, *can this kid really fight?* But there he is on videotape, boxing in a smooth rhythm, throwing crisp jabs, powerful right hands, and blistering left hooks. The foe at the end of his punches grimaces in pain. Cintron, wearing a scowl, shows no mercy.

Cintron, the perpetual student, sits silently as he watches himself, taking mental notes.

"I just try to keep learning," said the 22-year-old welterweight from Reading, Pennsylvania, who dreams of one day strapping a championship belt around his waist like his hero, Felix Trinidad. "Obviously, I want to be a world champion; that's for sure."

Outside the ring, Cintron is humble and trouble-free as they come. Inside the ring, he can dish out enough punishment to live up to his "Killer" moniker, having stopped 11 of the 12 foes he's faced as a pro. Six of his knockouts came in the first round, and at one point, he collected five of them in a row. At 5'10½", the lanky Cintron can do damage with either hand and has a sturdy chin. And his confidence is growing, especially after impressive sparring sessions with WBA welterweight titlist Andrew "Six Heads" Lewis and hard-hitting Arturo Gatti.

Cintron's Achilles' heel has been injuries to his right hand, which have kept him out of the ring for a few months. Still, he's kept up a brisk pace, fighting 12 times during his first year as a pro, including once on Showtime. All this for a young fighter who first picked up the gloves at age 19.



"I'm not one that just gets high on the power. I like the fact that the kid can box," said Marshall Kauffman, who trains and manages Cintron. "That's what I try to get out of him

(Continued on page 54)

Body Head Entertainment Presents

Roy Jones Jr.

RoundOne

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WHO ARE THE REAL CHAMPS?

Announcing THE RING's New Championship Policy

By Nigel Collins

Before he unified the 160-pound title, Bernard Hopkins spoke of the frustration he felt when introduced as the middleweight champion, only to be asked, "Which one?" And while Hopkins has taken care of his personal exasperation by winning all the belts, boxing at large still suffers from an excess of so-called world champions.

Split titles, caused by the proliferation of governing bodies, have long been one of the sport's most debilitating problems, a symptom of the greed and nefarious backroom politics that have gnawed away at boxing's integrity. The situation has become so confusing that the term "world champion" is now virtually meaningless. And with little or no consistency at the championship level, the disorder has filtered down, creating chaos in the rankings and encouraging corruption throughout the sport.

As much as THE RING would love to editorialize the various alphabet groups into extinction, these self-appointed, self-serving organizations have been nothing if not tenacious. But that doesn't mean we can't do something to help restore a measure of order and respectability, especially when it comes to settling the question of whom, exactly, are the genuine world champions.

It is with this goal in mind that THE RING has decided to establish a new championship policy, starting with this issue. For the first time since the May 1989 edition, THE RING will position the names of what we recognize as legitimate world champions at the top of their divisions, with the 10 leading contenders listed below.

PHOTO BY FRANK VITUCCI

PHOTO BY BRUCE MACNABB

Lennox Lewis, Roy Jones, and Bernard Hopkins are three of boxing's legitimate world champions, and all three have the RING belts to prove it. Each of these champs earned those belts by unifying the titles in their respective divisions.

Each fighter who obtains THE RING's recognition as a world champion will receive a RING belt as a symbol of his achievement. This will make it relatively easy for all fans to instantly recognize who is and who is not a bona fide champion.

Along with the installation of the true champions' names at the top of their respective divisions, we are dropping the partial titleholders' alphabet appellations, which were formerly noted next to their names in "THE RING Ratings" *(page 26)*. From now on, if readers wish to know who holds any of the alphabet titles, they will have to turn to the "Alphabet Ratings" *(page 64)*.

This new policy is not intended to discount the accomplishments of the alphabet titlists, many of who are outstanding fighters. It is, rather, a way to differentiate between a fighter who holds a "title" and an authentic world champion. This change in championship policy will not alter our coverage of fights. THE RING will continue to allot space based on the quality and significance of a match, regardless of whether it's for a valid world championship or an alphabet belt.

Now that the general concept has been explained, let's get to some specifics.

WHO ARE TODAY'S REAL CHAMPIONS?

Legitimate world champions head only four of the 17 weight classes currently published in THE RING. They are heavyweight Lennox Lewis, light heavyweight Roy Jones, middleweight Bernard Hopkins, and junior welterweight Kostya Tszyu.

These four men did not acquire their championship status arbitrarily. Each reached the apex of his profession by one of the tried and true methods recognized by THE RING. Let's examine the four world champions individually and explain

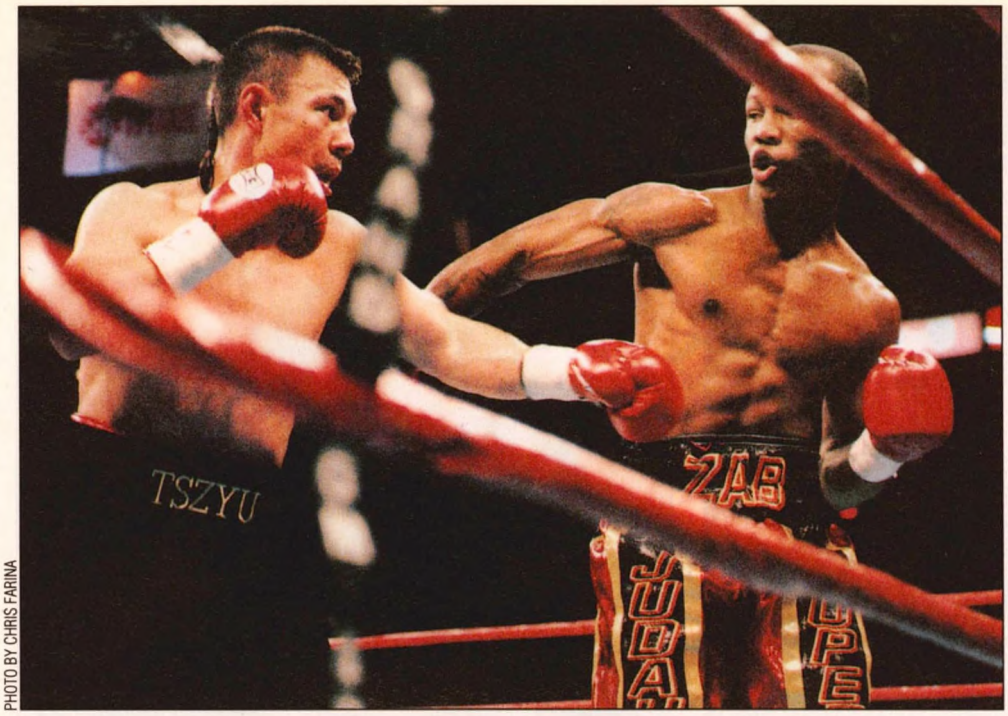

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Kostya Tszyu became the fight game's fourth undisputed champion by knocking out Zab Judah in November 2001. As this issue went to press, Tszyu's RING belt was in the process of being manufactured.

how we reached our conclusion.

Lewis was already the WBC titlist when he decisioned WBA/IBF beltholder Evander Holyfield in November 1999 to unify the titles. The fact that the WBA stripped Lewis of its recognition shortly thereafter is irrelevant. It is THE RING's firm belief that titles should only be won and lost in the ring, not the courtroom. Lewis is also the linear champion, having beaten the man (Shannon Briggs) who beat the man (George Foreman) who beat the man (Michael Moorer), etc., etc. And while Lewis temporarily lost the championship to Hasim Rahman, he is now world heavyweight champion again by virtue of his knockout triumph in the rematch.

Like Lewis, Jones put the parts of the 175-pound title together piece by piece. First, he won recognition as WBC titlist by outpointing Mike McCallum in November '96. In his next fight, he lost that belt to Montell Griffin via disqualification, but he regained it in the rematch. Next came the WBA version, which Jones captured with a decision over Lou Del Valle in September '98. Jones added the IBF belt in June '99 by decisioning Reggie Johnson.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE RING BELT

Some historians claim the the first championship belt awarded to a boxer was the one bare knuckles champion Tom Cribb received after defeating Tom Molineaux. That was back in 1809, 113 years before THE RING was founded in 1922. But as soon as he had the magazine up and running, founder and publisher Nat Fleischer gave a belt to reigning heavyweight champion Jack Dempsey. The second went to flyweight champion PanchoVilla.

Fleischer displays Emile Griffith's welterweight belt

Over the ensuing decades, virtually all world champions received RING belts, and it rapidly became boxing's primary symbol of excellence. That policy, however, was discontinued in the early-1990s, due partially to the increasingly perplexing problem of separating alphabet titlists from authentic world champions and partially because the publication had changed ownership. From then until the June 2000 issue, no world championship belts were awarded, although THE RING's Fighter of the Year and its pound-for-pound champions continued to be presented with belts. But when Lennox Lewis unified the heavyweight title for the first time since '92, we felt it was an opportune time to reinstate the custom.

Although it never looked like Cribb's belt, which was supposedly made out of lion skin and ornamented with silver lion claws, THE RING belt has changed slightly over the years. The first champion to have his photograph on his RING belt was Henry Armstrong, who is also the only fighter in history to hold three belts in three different weight classes simultaneously. The most noticeable deviation from the traditional style came in the early-'80s, when a whiskey distillery sponsored our belt. The current model, manufactured by Newport Marketing, combines the best elements from previous belts, while retaining its distinctive look.

Due to the rigid regulations governing the awarding of THE RING belt, it is the most difficult belt for a boxer to obtain. And that's the way it should be, because it represents real world championships and is only worn by real champions—just the way Fleischer intended when he initiated the tradition almost 80 years ago.

—NC

Hopkins was the next to unify. He annexed the vacant IBF title by knocking out Segundo Mercado in April '95, but had to wait until April 2001 to get a crack at the WBC belt, which he won by outpointing Keith Holmes. "The Executioner" unified the belts and eliminated any doubt as to who is the world's best 160-pounder by stopping then-WBA titlist Felix Trinidad in September '01.

Tszyu began his championship odyssey by stopping Miguel Angel Gonzalez in August '99 to win the vacant WBC super lightweight title. He gained the WBA's recognition with a TKO of Sharmba Mitchell in February '01, and then became the first undisputed 140-pound champion since Nicolino Locche in 1968 by stopping defending IBF titlist Zab Judah in November '01.

FILLING THE VACANCIES

While having 13 of 17 world championships vacant is hardly an ideal situation, it is far better than having a collection of counterfeit claimants muddling the championship picture. And as time passes, more vacancies will be filled, according to the following criteria:

As in the cases of three of the four current world champions (Jones, Hopkins, and Tszyu), a fighter who unifies the WBA, WBC, and IBF belts in a single weight class will be deemed world champion. The only exception would be when the championship in question is already held by a fighter who is not one of alphabet titlists. Confused? Here's a hypothetical that will explain the exception.

Let's say for discussion's sake that the various alphabet organizations were to strip Hopkins of their belts, and then another fighter unified those belts. Unless Hopkins had retired or moved to another weight class, THE RING would continue to recognize Hopkins as the middleweight champion because he'd never lost the title in the ring.

A second way for a fighter to become a bona fide champion is to beat a fighter already recognized as such. In other words, if Carl Daniels or whoever challenges Hopkins next beats him, that fighter will become the champion. If it sounds simplistic, it's because it is, which is exactly the way things are supposed to be.

Hall of Famers Willie Pep (top left) and Joe Brown (top right) and future Hall of Famer Pernell Whitaker (above) all wore RING championship belts during their distinguished careers. As these photos illustrate, the style of the belt has changed somewhat over the years.

Part of the beauty of boxing is that, under ideal circumstances, issues are settled in the ring—without interference from any organization.

If, however, we depend strictly on the two above-mentioned methods to fill all the championship vacancies, it might take forever. Therefore, THE RING has decided that under certain circumstances (each case will be examined individually), we will recognize a dominant alphabet titlist as world champion if he defeats another alphabet beltholder in the same division. For instance, should WBC welterweight titlist Shane Mosley, already considered the *real* 147-pound champion by most people, fight either WBA boss Andrew Lewis or IBF titlist Vernon Forrest, THE RING will consider the winner world welterweight champion. On the other hand, if Lewis and Forrest fought, the victor would *not* be recognized as champion because Mosley is rated ahead of both.

A fourth option for filling a championship vacancy would be when THE RING'S number-one contender fights our number-two contender, regardless of whether or not either of them hold alphabet titles at the time. The upcoming rematch between featherweights Erik Morales and Marco Antonio Barrera is such an instance, and the winner will receive recognition as world champion and a RING belt. As in the Morales-Barrera case, whenever a match is made that meets either the third or fourth conditions, THE RING, time permitting, will announce in advance that we will recognize the winner as world champion.

NO STRIPPING

It is extremely important to keep in mind that the bedrock of THE RING's philosophy is that titles can *only* be won or lost in the ring. True, there are times when a champion will duck a worthy contender, but the alphabet organizations' method of installing mandatory challengers and stripping titlists who don't defend against them in a prescribed period of time has proved exceedingly counterproductive. Not only does it lead to a state of affairs where a belt is unfairly taken away from a true champion, such as the WBA did to Lewis, but it also frequently creates gross mismatches when unworthy fighters are elevated to mandatory positions.

It is an ironic side effect of mandatory defenses that a titlist can use the rule to avoid deserving challengers, which certainly seems to be the case with Jones, who has fought a series of undeserving number-one challengers in order to keep his trio of alphabet light heavyweight belts.

Even if you assume that the alphabet groups' decision to establish mandatory challengers was motivated by good intentions, which is an awfully generous assumption, history has proven that the system is deeply flawed and creates far more problems than it solves.

Nevertheless, that doesn't mean that THE RING will do nothing if a world champion consistently avoids his toughest challenger(s). But instead of taking away a championship he won in the ring, we will use the pages of THE RING to persuade, cajole, and even embarrass the offending champion into doing the right thing. Granted, this won't always work, but the vast majority of fighters are proud individuals who want take an honorable course, even if it might turn out badly for them in the long run.

Remember when Floyd Patterson ducked Sonny Liston for years, because his manager, Cus D'Amato, knew he couldn't beat Liston? Well, even though Patterson probably also knew he didn't have a prayer, he disregarded D'Amato's advice and fought Liston anyway, because Patterson was a man of principle. And while relying on a champion's sense of honor is far from foolproof, it is preferable to relying on the honesty and intelligence of many of the individuals who run the alphabet organizations.

Bottom line: The *only* times THE RING will withdraw championship recognition is when a reigning champ moves to another weight class or retires.

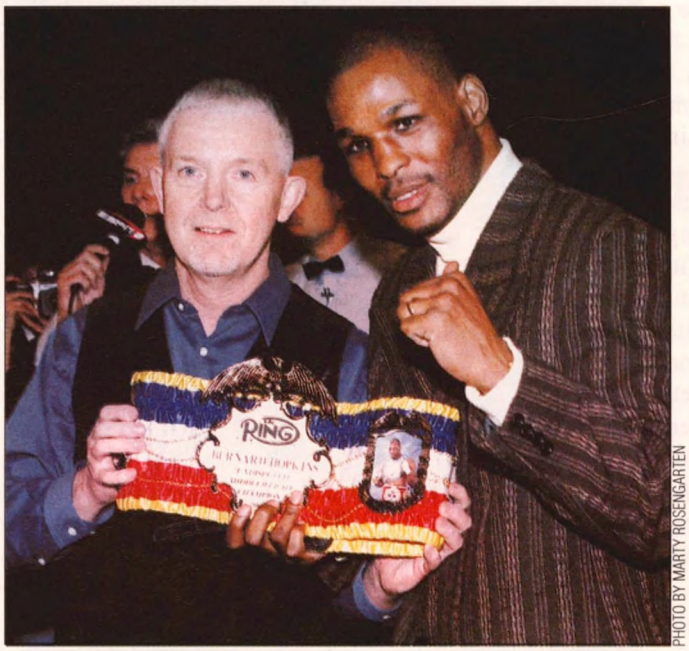

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Then and now: RING founder Nat Fleischer presents Randy Turpin with the middleweight championship belt in 1951 (above), and 50 years later, Editor-in-Chief Nigel Collins does the same with Hopkins (below).

IN CONCLUSION

We are not alone in the fight to bring a degree of sanity to the world championship situation. The alphabet organizations are no longer mentioned by the broadcast team during title fights televised by HBO. Max Kellerman repeatedly tells viewers to ignore these bogus groups during the studio portion of ESPN2's *Friday Night Fights*. Just as important from our perspective, countless readers have expressed their distain for these alphabet outlaws. Moreover, the IBF racketeering trial that sent its former president, Bob Lee, to jail, and the WBA's new "super champion" nonsense has further eroded what little credibility the alphabet groups had.

It is essential to understand that the only power the alphabet organizations have is the power the fans and the boxing community give them. There are no laws in any state that require them to be involved in any boxing match. They are a cancer that can be eradicated simply by acting as if they don't exist.

It is our hope that THE RING's new championship policy will bring greater clarity and integrity to a frequently bewildering and corrupt state of affairs. We have no hidden agenda or financial motive. We do not charge sanctioning fees, and unlike some of the alphabet organizations, we do not charge the champions for their belts. The betterment of boxing is our only objective.

While we are realistic enough to understand that THE RING's new championship policy won't automatically solve all of boxing's evils, we strongly believe that it's a significant step in the right direction. If nothing else, there will be no doubt in readers' minds whom the real world champions are—the ones wearing THE RING belt. ■

"THE BIBLE OF BOXING"

RATINGS ANALYSIS

(For the period ended December 2, 2001)

POUND-FOR-POUND

1. **SHANE MOSLEY**
   Welterweight
2. **BERNARD HOPKINS**
   Middleweight
3. **ROY JONES**
   Light Heavyweight
4. **MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA**
   Featherweight
5. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER**
   Junior Lightweight
6. **FELIX TRINIDAD**
   Middleweight
7. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
   Junior Middleweight
8. **RICARDO LOPEZ**
   Junior Flyweight
9. **KOSTYA TSZYU**
   Junior Welterweight
10. **ERIK MORALES**
    Featherweight

HEAVYWEIGHTS: In keeping with our new championship policy, Lennox Lewis moves from the number-two spot to the world champion's position at the top of the division. Hasim Rahman falls from first to fourth following his kayo loss to Lewis. Newcomers Jameel McCline and Fres Oquendo debut at the eighth and ninth spots, respectively, thanks to victories over Lance Whitaker (who was ninth last issue, but is now gone) and David Izon.

CRUISERWEIGHTS: Wayne Braithwaite (10th last issue) zooms up to number five due to his kayo of Louis Azille (ninth last issue). Azille departs. Ezra Sellers is aboard at number six after stopping Carl Thompson (fifth last issue). Thompson exits. Also debuting is Alexandre Gurov (now ninth) and former middleweight titlist Jorge Castro (now 10th). Fabrice Tiozzo (eighth last issue) hasn't fought in a year, and has been dropped for inactivity.

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS: World champion Roy Jones (first last issue) assumes his rightful place at the head of the division. This pushes everybody rated below Jones last issue up one position each, and makes room for Derrick Harmon at number 10.

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Dingaan Thobela (eighth last issue) exits following his TKO loss to Eric Lucas, who stays at number seven. Thobela's demise also advances Mads Larsen from ninth to eighth, and Manuel Siaca from 10th to ninth. Markus Beyer returns at number 10.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Bernard Hopkins (first last issue) is another world champion who now resides at the top of his division, which thrusts everybody ranked below him upward. Howard Eastman moved the farthest, leaping from seventh to third on the strength of his close decision loss to William Joppy, who is now rated second. Tito Mendoza enters at number 10.

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No changes.

WELTERWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS: Like fellow world champions Lewis, Jones, and Hopkins, Kostya Tszyu moves from number one to above the rankings. Sharmba Mitchell (second last issue) is now number one, while Zab Judah is number two. Everybody else moves up one spot, while veteran Ray Oliveira is back in the 10th position.

LIGHTWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS: No changes.

FEATHERWEIGHTS: Manuel Medina returns, taking over sixth place on the strength of his TKO of Frankie Toledo (sixth last issue), who slumps to the eighth position. Erik Morales (third last issue) and Naseem Hamed (second last issue) switch places because of Hamed's continued inactivity. Guty Espadas (10th last issue) departs.

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS: Yober Ortega debuts at number eight following his kayo of Jose Rojas. Agapito Sanchez (10th last issue) exits.

BANTAMWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS: No changes.

FLYWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS: No changes.

STRAWWEIGHTS: No changes.

POUND-FOR-POUND: No changes.■

THE RING RATINGS

For Period Ended December 2, 2001

PHOTO BY FARNK VITUCCI

Roy Jones has now been installed as the champ at light heavy

How Our Ratings Are Compiled

In each division, fighters are ranked according to their abilities and accomplishments.

These ratings reflect how the best fighters in the world rate against one another.

Ratings By The Editors

Records By Fight Fax Inc.

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Unlimited

Champ: LENNOX LEWIS
England 39-2-1

1. WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO
Ukraine 37-1
2. MIKE TYSON
Catskill, NY 49-3
3. CHRIS BYRD
Flint, MI 34-2
4. HASIM RAHMAN
Baltimore, MD 35-3
5. JOHN RUIZ
Chelsea, MA 37-4
6. KIRK JOHNSON
Canada 32-0-1
7. EVANDER HOLYFIELD
Fairburn, GA 37-5-1
8. JAMEEL McCLINE
Port Jefferson, NY 27-2-3
9. FRES OQUENDO
Puerto Rico 22-0
10. DAVID TUA
New Zealand 38-3

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 154 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. OSCAR DE LA HOYA
Whittier, CA 34-2
2. FERNANDO VARGAS
Oxnard, CA 22-1
3. WINKY WRIGHT
St. Petersburg, FL 42-3
4. FRANCISCO CASTILLEJO
Spain 51-5
5. BRONCO McKART
Monroe, MI 45-3
6. YORY BOY CAMPAS
Mexico 79-4
7. ALEX BUNEMA
Dallas, TX 19-3-1
8. J.C. CANDELO
Denver, CO 23-3-3
9. ROMAN KARMAZIN
Russia 28-0-1
10. STEVE ROBERTS
England 27-0

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 126 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA
Mexico 54-3
2. ERIK MORALES
Mexico 41-0
3. NASEEM HAMED
England 35-1
4. JOHNNY TAPIA
Albuquerque, NM 50-2-2
5. DERRICK GAINER
Pensacola, FL 38-5
6. MANUEL MEDINA
Mexico 60-11
7. JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ
Mexico 37-2
8. FRANKIE TOLEDO
Paterson, NJ 40-6-1
9. MBULELO BOTILE
South Africa 27-2
10. WILLIAM ABELYAN
Las Vegas, NV 17-4-1

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 122 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. BONES ADAMS
Henderson, KY 41-4-3
2. PAULIE AYALA
Ft. Worth, TX 33-1
3. MANNY PACQUIAO
Philippines 33-2-1
4. WILLIE JORRIN
Sacramento, CA 28-0
5. LEHLO LEDWABA
South Africa 33-2-1
6. OSCAR LARIOS
Mexico 41-3-1
7. MICHAEL BRODIE
England 32-1
8. YOBER ORTEGA
Venezuela 32-3-1
9. ENRIQUE SANCHEZ
Mexico 28-2-2
10. JOSE LUIS VALBUENA
Venezuela 19-2-1

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 118 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. TIM AUSTIN
Cincinnati, OH 23-0-1
2. VEERAPOL SAHAPROM
Thailand 32-1-1
3. EIDY MOYA
Venezuela 15-1
4. RAFAEL MARQUEZ
Mexico 26-3
5. MARK JOHNSON
Washington, D.C. 40-2
6. JOHNNY BREDAHL
Denmark 51-2
7. MAURICIO MARTINEZ
Panama 19-3-1
8. ADAN VARGAS
Mexico 36-3-1
9. HERIBERTO RUIZ
Mexico 22-1-1
10. GENARO GARCIA
Mexico 24-3

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 190 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. JUAN CARLOS GOMEZ
   Germany 34-0
2. VASSILIY JIROV
   Kazakhstan 30-0
3. VIRGIL HILL
   Bismarck, ND 47-3
4. JOHNNY NELSON
   England 41-12-1
5. WAYNE BRAITHWAITE
   Guyana 17-0
6. EZRA SELLERS
   Washington, D.C. 24-4
7. O'NEIL BELL
   Atlanta, GA 17-1
8. MARCELO DOMINGUEZ
   Argentina 32-4-1
9. ALEXANDRE GUROV
   Ukraine 29-3-1
10. JORGE CASTRO
    Argentina 120-7-3

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 175 pounds

Champ: ROY JONES
Pensacola, FL 45-1

1. DARIUSZ MICHALCZEWSKI
   Germany 44-0
2. ERIC HARDING
   Philadephia, PA 20-1-1
3. REGGIE JOHNSON
   Houston, TX 42-6-1
4. MONTELL GRIFFIN
   Chicago, IL 41-3
5. ANTONIO TARVER
   Orlando, FL 18-1
6. JULIO GONZALEZ
   Huntington Beach, CA 27-1
7. BRUNO GIRARD
   France 39-2-2
8. LOU DEL VALLE
   Bronx, NY 31-2-1
9. CLINTON WOODS
   England 40-1
10. DERRICK HARMON
    Chicago, IL 20-2

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 168 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. SVEN OTTKE
   Germany 25-0
2. JOE CALZAGHE
   Wales 32-0
3. BYRON MITCHELL
   Ozark, AL 24-1-1
4. ANTWUN ECHOLS
   Davenport, IA 25-4-1
5. CHARLES BREWER
   Philadelphia, PA 37-8
6. THOMAS TATE
   Houston, TX 41-6
7. ERIC LUCAS
   Canada 34-4-3
8. MADS LARSEN
   Denmark 38-1
9. MANUEL SIACA
   Puerto Rico 15-4
10. MARKUS BEYER
    Germany 23-1

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 160 pounds

Champ: BERNARD HOPKINS
Philadelphia, PA 40-2-1

1. FELIX TRINIDAD
   Puerto Rico 40-1
2. WILLIAM JOPPY
   Washington, D.C. 33-2-1
3. HOWARD EASTMAN
   England 32-1
4. ARMAND KRAJNC
   Sweden 26-0
5. HARRY SIMON
   Namibia 22-0
6. KEITH HOLMES
   Washington, D.C. 35-3
7. HASSINE CHERIFI
   France 32-5-1
8. CARL DANIELS
   St. Louis, MO 47-3-1
9. ANTONIO PERUGINO
   Italy 18-0
10. TITO MENDOZA
    Panama 25-3

WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 147 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. SHANE MOSLEY
   Pomona, CA 38-0
2. ANDREW LEWIS
   Guyana 21-0-1
3. VERNON FORREST
   Atlanta, GA 33-0
4. THOMAS DAMGAARD
   Denmark 26-0
5. DANIEL SANTOS
   Puerto Rico 24-2-1
6. ANTONIO DIAZ
   Coachella, CA 37-3
7. ANTONIO MARGARITO
   Mexico 25-3
8. MANUEL GOMEZ
   Mexico 22-10
9. MICHELE PICCIRILLO
   Italy 36-1-1
10. JAMES PAGE
    Pittsburg, CA 25-4

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 140 pounds

Champ: KOSTYA TSZYU
Australia 28-1-1

1. SHARMBA MITCHELL
   Washington, D.C. 47-3
2. ZAB JUDAH
   Brooklyn, NY 27-1
3. DeMARCUS CORLEY
   Washington, D.C. 26-1-1
4. ENER JULIO
   Colombia 21-3
5. RANDALL BAILEY
   Miami, FL 24-1
6. MICKY WARD
   Lowell, MA 37-10
7. BEN TACKIE
   Ghana 23-2
8. OKTAY URKAL
   Germany 28-1
9. TERRONN MILLETT
   St. Louis, MO 26-2-1
10. RAY OLIVEIRA
    New Bedford, MA 42-8-1

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 135 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. JOSE LUIS CASTILLO
   Mexico 44-4-1
2. STEVE JOHNSTON
   Denver, CO 33-2-1
3. PAUL SPADAFORA
   Pittsburgh, PA 34-0
4. RAUL BALBI
   France 49-4-1
5. ANGEL MANFREDY
   Gary, IN 39-5-1
6. JULIO DIAZ
   Coachella, CA 23-1
7. ARTUR GRIGORIAN
   Uzbekistan 33-0
8. COLIN DUNNE
   England 35-1
9. JESSE JAMES LEIJA
   San Antonio, TX 42-5-2
10. JUAN LAZCANO
    El Paso, TX 28-2-1

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 130 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. FLOYD MAYWEATHER
   Grand Rapids, MI 27-0
2. JOEL CASAMAYOR
   Miami, FL 26-0
3. ACELINO FREITAS
   Brazil 30-0
4. JESUS CHAVEZ
   Mexico 35-2
5. STEVE FORBES
   Las Vegas, NV 20-1
6. JONGKWON BAEK
   South Korea 22-1-1
7. LAKVA SIM
   Mongolia 14-2-1
8. PHILLIP NDOU
   South Africa 25-1
9. JOHN BROWN
   Atlantic City, NJ 23-9
10. ALEJANDRO GONZALEZ
    Mexico 48-4-1

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 115 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. MASAMORI TOKUYAMA
   North Korea 25-2-1
2. CELES KOBAYASHI
   Japan 24-4-3
3. FELIX MACHADO
   Venezuela 21-3-1
4. GERRY PENALOSA
   Philippines 43-4-2
5. SAMSON TOYOTA-THAILAND
   Thailand 41-0
6. JESUS ROJAS
   Venezuela 34-9-3
7. PEDRO ALCAZAR
   Panama 22-1-1
8. IN JOO CHO
   South Korea 18-2
9. MAURICIO PASTRANA
   Colombia 27-3
10. MARTIN CASTILLO
    Mexico 21-0

FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 112 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. ERIC MOREL
   Madison, WI 30-0
2. PONGSAKLEK SINGWANGCHA
   Thailand 41-2
3. IRENE PACHECO
   Colombia 26-0
4. HAWK MAKEPULA
   South Africa 19-1
5. ALEJANDRO MONTIEL
   Mexico 47-3
6. FERNANDO MONTIEL
   Mexico 23-0-1
7. MEDGOEN TOYOTA-THAILAND
   Thailand 24-1
8. SAEN SOR PLOENCHIT
   Thailand 39-1
9. MALCOLM TUNACAO
   Philippines 11-1-2
10. ALEXANDER MUNOZ
    Venezuela 16-0

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 108 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. RICARDO LOPEZ
   Mexico 50-0-1
2. YOSAM CHOI
   South Korea 23-1
3. PICHIT C. SIRIWAT
   Thailand 23-1
4. ROSENDO ALVAREZ
   Nicaragua 29-2-1
5. BEBIS MENDOZA
   Colombia 26-1
6. NELSON DIEPPA
   Puerto Rico 21-2-1
7. JORGE ARCE
   Mexico 27-3-1
8. HIDENOBU HONDA
   Japan 23-1
9. ZOLANI PETELO
   South Africa 17-3-2
10. BABY JAKE MATLALA
    South Africa 51-12-2

STRAWWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 105 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. JOSE AGUIRRE
   Mexico 26-1-1
2. ROBERTO LEYVA
   Mexico 18-0-1
3. CHANA PORPAOIN
   Thailand 44-2-2
4. KEITARO HOSHINO
   Japan 21-7
5. JOMA GAMBOA
   Philippines 31-6-1
6. NOEL ARAMBULET
   Venezuela 13-2-1
7. WANDEE SINGWANGCHA
   Thailand 28-4
8. KERMIN GUARDIA
   Colombia 33-2
9. DANIEL REYES
   Colombia 24-1
10. MIGUEL BARRERA
    Colombia 20-0-2

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April 1986: Witherspoon Tames Tubbs For WBA Title. Plus: Dream fights, Greg Haugen, Tyrell Biggs, Mark Breland, Paul Gonzales, HBO tourney, Witherspoon-Tubbs, Frank Warren, Gene Tunney.

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June 1986: Barry's Back In The USA: McGuigan Breathes A Breath Of Fresh Air Into American Fight Scene. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Robbie Sims, Qawi-Holyfield preview, Berbick-Thomas, Bruno-Coetzee.

July 1986: Spinks-Holmes II: Who Really Won? Plus: Frank Bruno, Richie Sandoval, Kevin Watts, Tyson-Tillis, Boza-Edwards-Alli, Johnson-Burns.

Aug. 1986: Is Sugar Ray Still Sweet? Plus: Lloyd Honeyghan, Tyson-Green, Cooney-Gregg, Hall of Fame (Eder Jofre, Benny Lynch, Bud Taylor, Sam McVey, Nat Langham, John Chambers), Bernardo Pinango.

Sept. 1986: Gerry Cooney vs. Mike Tyson: Who Would Win? Plus: Cruz-McGuigan, Hearns-Medal, Tyson-Gross, Sims-Duran.

Dec. 1986: The Weekend That Shook The Boxing World. Rosario-Bramble & Honeyghan-Curry. Plus: Butch Lewis interview, Buster Drayton, Hector Camacho, Jake LaMotta.

April 1987: Hagler-Leonard Souvenir Issue. Plus: Czyz, Orlando Canizales, Mugabi-Thomas, Biggs-Snipes, Chavez-LaPorte, Bonecrusher-Witherspoon II, Haugen-Paul.

May 1987: Mike Tyson: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awards, *The Ring* annual ratings, Louie Espinoza, Herol Graham.

June 1987: Vinny Paz: Phenom Or Phony? Plus: Tyson-Bonecrusher, Mark Breland, Brian Mitchell, Holyfield, Czyz-Edwards, Olajide-Lee, Curry-Montgomery.

July 1987: Spinks-Cooney: The Fight That Refused To Die. Plus: The new *Ring* ratings, Terry Marsh, George Foreman's return, Khaosai Galaxy, Hearns-Andries, Whitaker-Mayweather.

Aug. 1987: Sugar Ray: Still In Style. Plus: Leonard-Hagler, all-time heavyweight ratings, Czyz-MacDonald, Camacho-Davis.

Sept. 1987: Michael Olajide: The Look Of The Future? Plus: Tyson-Thomas, Jeff Fenech, middleweight muddle, Tsuyoshi Hamada, Juan Roldan, Harold Knight.

Nov. 1987: Tyson Wins Heavyweight Triple Crown. Plus: McCallum-Curry, Carlos Monzon interview, triple champions, Orlin & Terry Norris, Ramirez-Alli, Fenech-Richardson, Matthew Hilton.

Dec. 1987: Spinks & Lewis: Boxing's Beastie Boys. Plus: Starling-Breland, Ramzi Hassan, Honeyghan-Hatcher, Holyfield-Ocasio.

Jan. 1988: Darrin Van Horn-Million Dollar Baby? Plus: Evander Holyfield, Hill-Stewart, Juan Coggi, great hookers, AIDS.

Feb. 1988: Gold Outshines Glitter: Tate Tops Olajide. Plus: Tyson-Biggs, Kalambay-Barkley, Hearns-Roldan, fights we'd like to see.

April 1988: Evander Holyfield: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Special year-end awards, Holyfield-Qawi II, Foreman-Sekorski, Hill-Angulo.

May 1988: George Foreman: "I Can Beat Tyson." Plus: Tyson-Holmes, Jesse Benavides, Showtime, no-knockout artists.

Aug. 1988: Julio Cesar Chavez: The Kid From Culiacan. Plus: Holyfield, bad decisions, Lockridge-Knight, Starling-Breland II, Brown-Trice, Haugen-Santana.

Sept. 1988: Sugar Ray: Here He Comes Again! Plus: Andries-Czyz, Kid Chocolate, Don Dunphy, Don Lalonde.

Oct. 1988: Mike Tyson: What Price Glory? Plus: Tyson-Spinks, Hearns-Barkley, Davey Moore.

Nov. 1988: Donny Lalonde: "Sugar Ray is Out Of His Mind!" Plus: Hall of Fame selections (Carlos Ortiz, Joe Brown, Billy Graham, Cus D'Amato, Jimmy Jacobs), Nunn-Tate, Molinares-Starling, Honeyghan-Chung, '88 Olympians.

Jan. 1989: Meldrick Taylor: Philly Phenom. Plus: Marvin Hagler, Alex Wallau, Taylor-McGirt, Olympic results.

Feb. 1989: Julio Cesar Chavez. Plus: Chavez-Ramirez, all-time lightweight ratings, Louie Espinoza, Simon Brown, Roger Mayweather.

March 1989: Hearns Next For Sugar Ray? Plus: Leonard-Lalonde, Prince Charles Williams, Hearns-Kinchen, Nunn-Roldan, Hines-Hilton.

May 1989: The Best Of '88. Plus: Year-end awards, Evander Holyfield, Pryor-Morales, Fenech-Navarro.

Jan. 1990: Boxing's Bible Reborn At Age 68. Plus: Carlos Monzon, Mike Tyson, Leonard-Duran, Daniel Zaragoza, Nunn-Barkley, Whitaker-Ramirez, George Foreman (color).

Feb. 1990: Mike Tyson: Riddick Bowe & Ray Mercer Take Aim. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Gerry Cooney, Chuck Wepner, Antonio Esparragoza, Roman-Laciar.

March 1990: The '80s—Great Fights, Great Fighters (color). Plus: Jeff Harding, Evander Holyfield, Pete Rademacher, Sharkey-McCoy.

April 1990: Pernell Whitaker: Fighter Of The Year (color). Plus: Tiger Flowers, Duran-Leonard, Chavez-Taylor preview, Jorge Paez, Ali-Cooper.

May 1990: Big George Talks Tough: "Tyson Won't Be That Difficult!" Plus: Ed Hopson, Russian fighters, grudge wars, Archie Moore, Kid Berg, Marcel Cerdan, Chavez-Cortes.

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July 1990: "I'm Hungrier Than Ever Before," By Evander Holyfield. Plus: James Toney, Buddy McGirt, Glenwood Brown, Aaron Davis, Michael Carbajal, Jorge Paez, Kid Gavilan, Mark Breland, Ali-Liston II (color).

Aug. 1990: Chavez: His Greatness Confirmed ... Is He The Best Mexican Fighter Ever? Plus: Matthew Saad Muhammad, John L. Sullivan & Mike Tyson, Michael Nunn, Mark Breland, Harold Johnson, Cus D'Amato, Louis-Godoy (color).

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Nov. 1990: Tyson vs. Foreman. Can Iron Mike Stop The Blast From The Past? Plus: Bruce Seldon, best chins, Sullivan-Kilrain (color), Azumah Nelson, LaStarza.

Dec. 1990: Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Douglas-Holyfield preview, Julio Cesar Chavez, Joe Grim, Whitaker-Nazario, Rosi-Van Horn, Benny Leonard, Douglas-Tyson (color).

Jan. 1991: Boxing's Baddest Bad Boy: Nigel Benn Plays By His Own Rules. Plus: Roberto Duran, Kid Akeem, Jose Napoles, Jimmy Carruthers, LaMotta-Zale, Dempsey-Willard (color).

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Jan. 2002 (108-Page Extra): Oscar Feeds His Critics: Did He Chicken Out Against Vargas? Plus: Vladimir Klitschko, Chris Byrd, 20 greatest featherweights, "Caveman" Bob Moha.

Feb. 2002: How I Shocked The World, By Bernard Hopkins. Plus: Marco Antonio Barrera, Fernando Vargas, Francisco Bojado, boxers and national crises.

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Instead of the flicking, range-finding jab he used to beat David Tua, a rejuvenated Lewis employed a hard, hurtful jab against Rahman. The punch cut "The Rock's" left eye and set him up for the finishing right.

PHOTO BY MATTHEW STOCKMAN/ALLSPORT

LENNOX IS KING AGAIN

BUT THE MAINSTREAM WON'T CROWN HIM TILL HE BEATS TYSON

By Joe Santoliquito

When you're the best, you really shouldn't have to say anything. The world should acknowledge your accomplishments, not place them in a shoe box under the bed to only leaf through when convenient.

When Lennox Lewis fell in shocking fashion to Hasim Rahman in South Africa on April 22, 2001, the boxing world seemed to turn its collective back on the two-time former heavyweight champ. Suddenly forgotten was the fact that he beat Evander Holyfield (most believe twice), that Riddick Bowe avoided him, and that Mike Tyson did, too. Lewis had been arguably the best heavyweight of his era, yet with the loss to Rahman freshest in everyone's mind, all that he had done before was tucked away in that shoe box.

Granted, it was Lewis who placed himself in that position by showing up unprepared for the first fight with Rahman. So in the rematch on November 17 at the Mandalay Bay Casino & Resort in Las Vegas, Lewis took it upon himself to erase that memory, blowing Rahman out in four rounds. His devastation of Rahman provided personal redemption, and it served as a reminder to the world of just how good Lewis can be.

By beating Rahman, and at the same time regaining the IBF and WBC heavyweight belts, Lewis joined Muhammad Ali and Holyfield as the only three-time heavyweight champs in boxing history.

Lewis also convinced the world he is the most dominant heavyweight today. He's amassed a body of work that is unsurpassed by any of his contemporaries, including Tyson. Just one look at his achievements over 13 years as a pro speaks for itself: 12 title defenses, and a 43-2-1 (8) record in 16 championship fights, not to mention beating Holyfield for the undisputed title in 1999. Disregard what some may perceive as Lewis' boorish personality or drab style, and those numbers not only make Lewis a logical first-ballot Hall of Fame choice, but rate him among the top heavyweights of all-time.

So Lewis' accomplishments are being heralded again, thanks in no small part to his performance in the Rahman rematch. The 36-year-old Lewis torched the naysayers with as impressive a display as he has put on since he crushed Razor Ruddock inside of two rounds in 1992. His jab carried the impact of a power punch, and his timing and combination punching were impeccable. When a perfect right hand flattened Rahman at 1:29 of the fourth, Lewis once again became the man to beat at heavyweight.

But is the general public aware of that? Or is a certain former champion by the name of Mike Tyson still the man to beat as far as those who don't follow boxing closely are concerned? As soon as the rematch with Rahman was over, the magnetic name of Tyson was quickly broached, and not just because he'll provide Lewis with a career-high payday. The big Brit with the murderous right hand seems to need further verification in the minds of the American sports fans, and only by vanquishing the world's most famous heavyweight will Lewis rise to the prominence he deserves.

But even as the prospects of such a spectacular were talked about among Lewis' people, Emanuel Steward, Lewis' Hall of Fame trainer, downplayed the fight in terms of how formidable a challenge Tyson presents.

"The reason why Tyson was looking to fight Ray Mercer first is that he knows

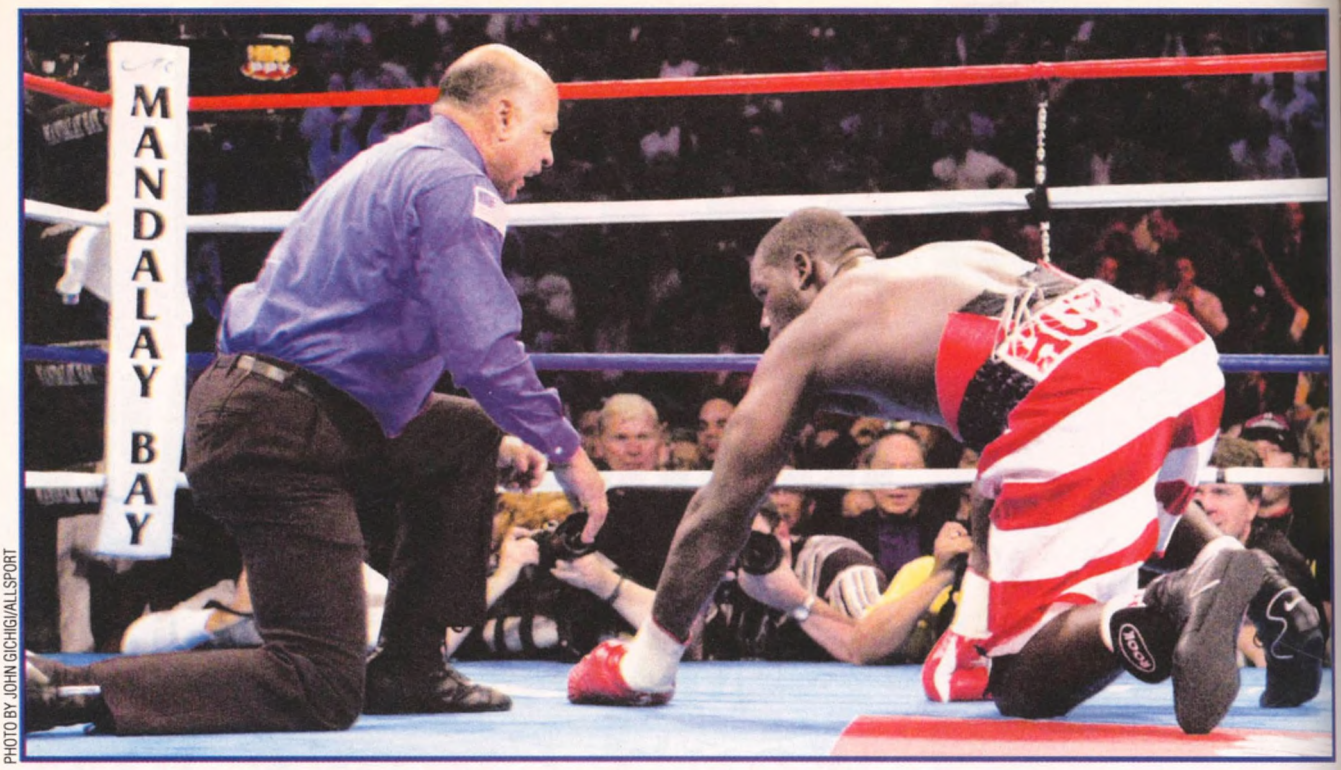

PHOTO BY JOHN GICHIGI/ALLSPORT

Referee Joe Cortez counts over Rahman after Lewis floored the defending heavyweight champion with a right hand in the fourth round. Rahman tried to beat the count, but fell back down again and was counted out after almost regaining his feet.

he's not ready to fight Lennox," Steward said. "He's still insecure. He doesn't feel he's ready, but the people in his camp want to make the fight. I've been with them, and they want to see it made as quickly as possible because of the instability in Mike's life. He's afraid of Lennox Lewis, and that's a plain fact.

"People are still living with the Mike Tyson of '85 or '86. They don't want to let go of that image. I'd like to see Lennox knock out Mike and maybe have a couple more fights. There would be nothing else for him to achieve. When he's prepared, and knows he's in with a good fighter, I don't think there's any boxer in heavyweight history who would have an easy night with him. He goes to another level.

"Mike Tyson can never be considered one of the great heavyweights. He was a great attraction, but if you actually studied his accomplishments, he wouldn't even be in the top 20. If he wants to fight Lennox, they should sign right now. If he doesn't want to, we'll think of moving him in another direction."

Dressed elegantly in black and sitting amongst a group of supporters at a post-fight party at Mandalay Bay, Lewis was trying to bask in his most recent accomplishment. But there's not much time for basking when everyone is already talking about the next step. Lewis realizes that next step is Tyson, even though he feels Iron Mike is not as deserving of a shot as some other heavyweights today, such as his *Ocean's Eleven* co-star Wladimir Klitschko, IBF mandatory Chris Byrd, and fellow Canadian Olympian Kirk Johnson.

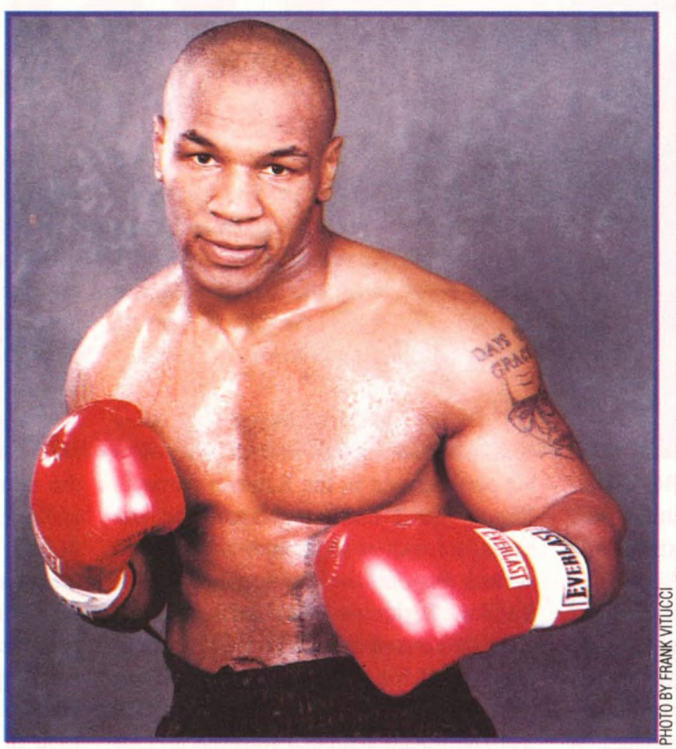

PHOTO BY FRANK VITUCCI

Practically the first thing everybody wanted to know after Lewis iced Rahman was when he was going to fight Mike Tyson. While Lewis is more than willing to accommodate Iron Mike, he questions both Tyson's qualifications and the ex-champ's ability to beat Ray Mercer in a proposed tuneup.

"Who's Tyson fought to deserve a chance against me? He's just coming in with only his name," Lewis said. "I know that's the fight that the public wants to see, but I look at Tyson and think, *Boy, can he really contend with me?* They put him in with a blimp [Brian Nielsen] who couldn't do anything. Would it be a hard fight for me? No, I don't think it would. Look at the people I'm fighting and compare them to the ones he's fighting. He

PHOTO BY FRED CALLOWAY

Conditioning played a key role in the differences between Lewis' performance in the two Rahman fights. For the rematch, Lewis (pictured with trainer Emanuel Steward holding the pads) trained harder and entered the ring a fit and firm 246½ pounds, 6½ pounds lighter than he was in South Africa.

some 15 years ago, would have had a chance against Lewis. But if Lewis attacks Tyson with the same venom he showed in dismantling Rahman, Tyson could be in for the quickest defeat of his career. Lewis harnessed the frustration of the hiccup in South Africa to enter the Rahman fight in the best shape he's been in since the early-1990s. He weighed a svelte 246½, down from the career-high 253 in South Africa, and boxed up on his toes.

"Lennox Lewis, as I've said before, has so much talent," Steward said. "When I saw him dancing around, I said, 'Look at my baby out there.' He was jabbing, giving Rahman angles where Rahman could never get set to throw the right hand."

While most predicted a dull affair, projecting a timid Lewis keeping Rahman at a comfortable distance with the jab, Lewis applied more pressure than anyone could well lose against Ray Mercer.

"The funny thing is, though, after Tyson's last fight when he boxed that blimp, he said he needed two more fights. And I'm saying, 'Boy, this fight will never come off.' We'll have to see what happens. There are other guys out there who deserve a chance as well."

But who needs whom more? Does Tyson need Lewis more, or does Lewis still need Tyson more to fortify his legacy?

"That's a good question," Steward said. "Lennox, I think, has the edge right now. A few years ago, Lennox may have needed Mike, but now it's 60-40. Lennox has much more respect now. After what happened against Rahman, Lennox doesn't need to fight Mike Tyson.

"It's just a very intriguing fight. That intrigue still exists. Mike, the bad boy Mike, the street Mike, against the gentleman Lennox, is something people want to see. If Mike does want to fight Lennox, and we do take the fight, Mike is still extremely dangerous. He's still one of the most devastating one-punch fighters ever in the heavyweight division. I'm a big Mike Tyson fan. Every Friday night when he was fighting, I had to get home to watch Mike fight."

Maybe that vintage Tyson, the one whom Steward rushed home to watch

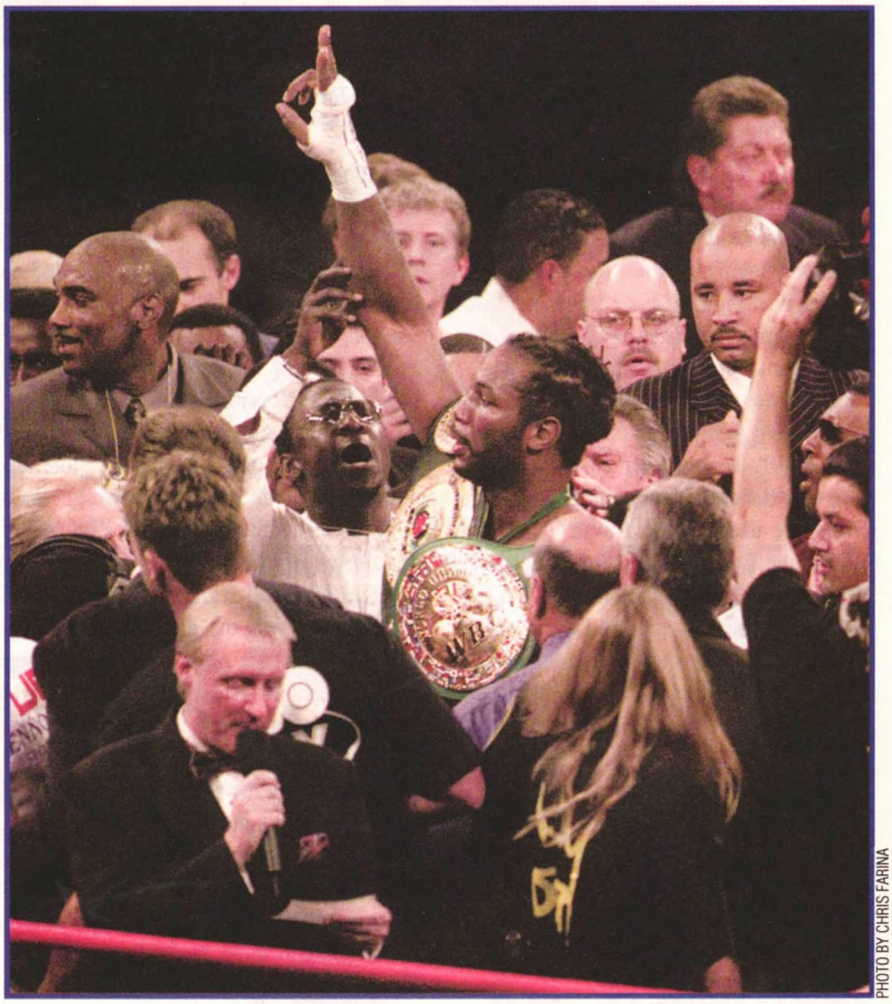

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Ring announcer Jimmy Lennon declares that Lewis is champ once again. Just about the only thing remaining for Lewis to do is win over fans who won't be convinced of his greatness until he beats Tyson.

anticipated, including the 29-year-old Rahman.

"I thought he attacked more than he did the last time and he didn't provide me a chance to counter with my own right hand," Rahman said immediately after the fight. "He kept his distance well. I have to give credit to Lennox. He hit me with a hard right hand that I didn't even see coming. He hit me with the right hand off the left hook. It was a good punch. He fought a good fight."

But "The Rock" still fell short of giving Lewis all the credit he deserved, despite the fact that when referee Joe Cortez signalled the end of his seven-month reign, Rahman had been thoroughly beaten.

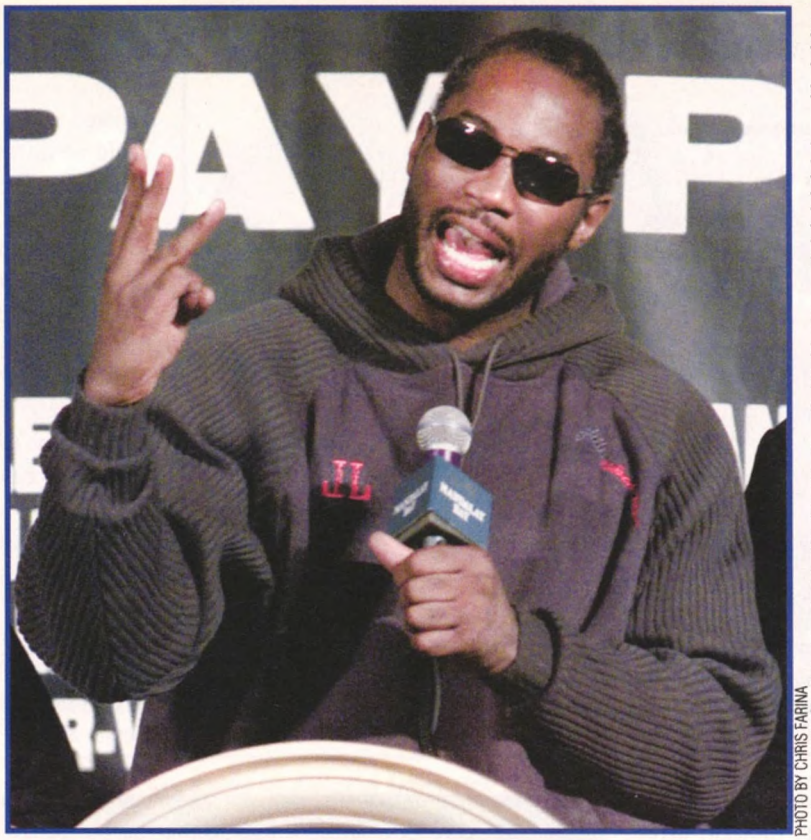

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

"Who has Tyson fought to deserve a chance against me?" asked Lewis at the Rahman postfight press conference. The answer is nobody, but that doesn't mean a victory over the still-popular Tyson won't enhance Lewis' legacy.

"The situation is, there are no dominant heavyweight champs today," Rahman said. "Lennox Lewis, Mike Tyson, Hasim Rahman, Evander Holyfield, John Ruiz, any of us can get beat on any given day. I just think there's no heavyweight champ who is going to stay at the top right now."

Hardly anyone who witnessed the fight agreed with Rahman's assessment. Lewis, 39-2-1 (30), snapped off a heavy jab that was very different from the pawing rangefinder he used in the David Tua fight. Within the first minute of the fight, Lewis had opened a cut above Rahman's left eye.

By the second round, Lewis established a rhythm, staying a comfortable distance from Rahman, while blinding the champ with the jab. Sensing his fighter was ready to unleash on the back-pedalling Rahman, Steward told Lewis between the third and fourth rounds to attack. Steward saw that Rahman was unable to counterpunch, and that because of his slow feet, Rahman was not able to make up the distance and utilize his right hand.

Lewis set up the knockout perfectly, positioning his opponent's head with a left hook, followed by a pulverizing right to the chin that spilled Rahman to the canvas, where he landed on his back. Cortez counted as Rahman, 35-3 (29), tried to stand, and reached 10 just as The Rock stumbled back down again.

The victory was so emphatic, even the harshest Lewis critics were impressed.

"I often hated the way Lennox fights, but I've written that Lennox has more talent than anybody in the heavyweight division; he just doesn't use it," said Wally Matthews of the *New York Post*. "For whatever reason, Rahman came into the fight like he was the guy coming off the knockout loss. He never put any pressure on Lennox, he allowed Lennox to get comfortable, and Lennox realized nothing was coming and decided to get more and more brave. By the third round, you could tell it was only a matter of time.

"This Rahman rematch was a very important fight in Lennox's career, but more important is the way you do it. Lennox could have made this a stinkin' fight, and I thought he would, in order to try to win by jabbing and holding. But the fact that Lennox got in there and got this guy out says a lot about his courage and determination."

Lewis always has had Matthews' respect, but his safety-first approach has made him hard to love.

"Heavyweights are supposed to be the epitome of toughness in boxing," Matthews said. "They are the ones who are supposed to set the standard for the way fights are fought. Unfortunately, Lennox has rarely done that, especially in the rematch against Holyfield. He knew he was fighting a shot guy and still took no chances, whereas against Rahman, he knew he was in there against a guy who knocked him out. Lennox went in and fought like a man, and I give him credit for that."

Minutes after beating Rahman, Lewis couldn't escape the clutches of what now appears to be his destiny: a confrontation with Tyson. Amongst the throng of fans and reporters who had gathered at the postfight press conference, a voice crowed out, "We coming for you, we coming for you." It was none other than Steve "Crocodile" Fitch, looking like a weathered Barney doll in his gaudy purple felt sweat suit. The self-proclaimed Tyson town crier was there to serve notice that the former undisputed heavyweight champ was more than a little interested in meeting Lewis.

Lewis stood behind the podium and just grinned. He didn't have to say much, because he knew he was on top again, that the shoe box wasn't tucked away anymore. Maybe he needs Tyson to satisfy the mainstream sports fans who are ignorant to what's really going on in boxing. But for his own satisfaction—and to remind those within the boxing world who the best is—what Lewis did on November 17 should have been more than sufficient. ■

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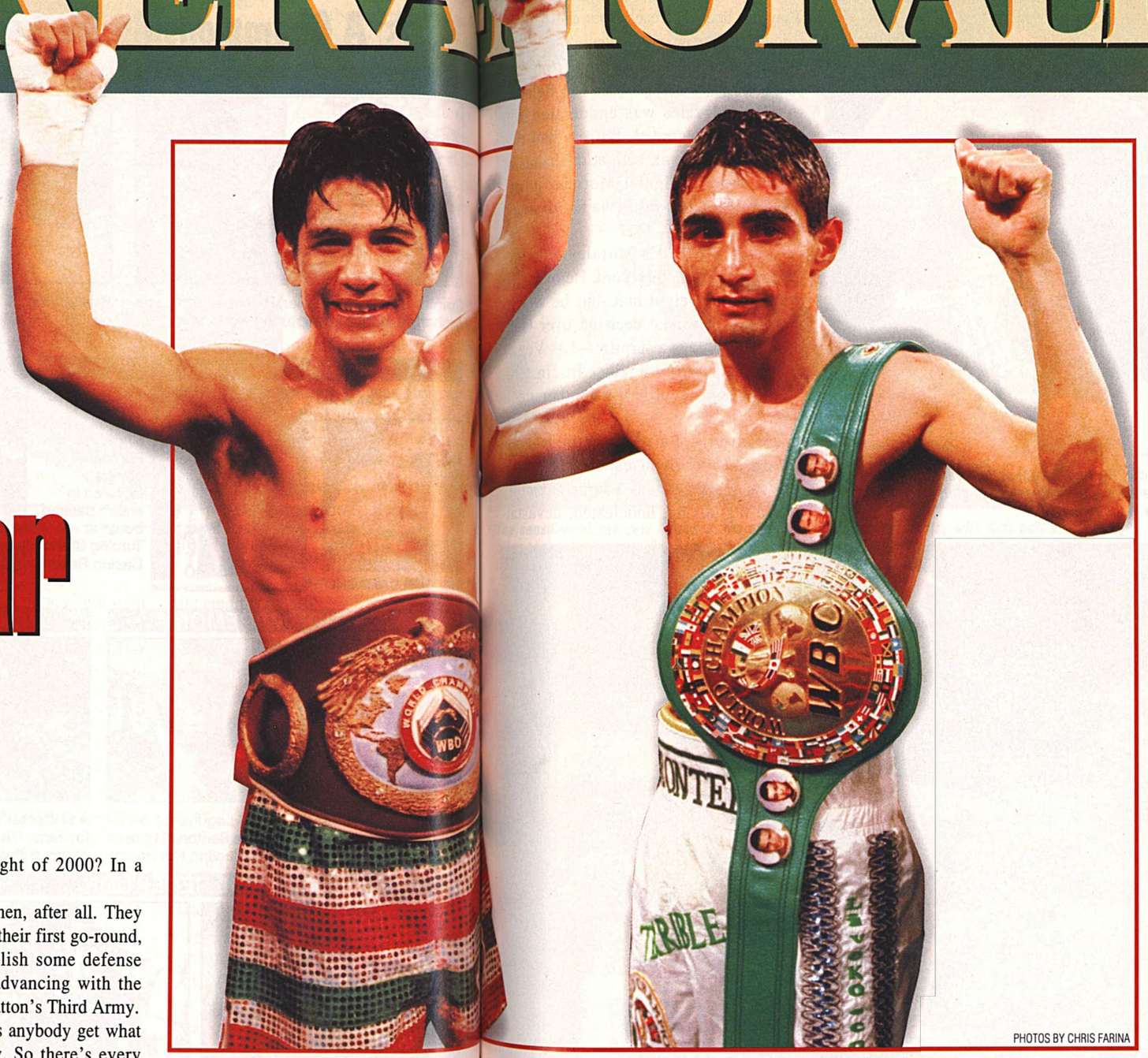
BARRERA-MORALES II

Can It Be The Fight Of The Year Again?



PHOTOS BY CHRIS FARINA

By Ivan Goldman

The stirring February 2000 battle between Marco Antonio Barrera and Erik Morales is already a part of boxing folklore. It was like dynamite that exploded for 12 rounds.

Fans that night couldn't believe what they were seeing. The pace was incredible. The level of aggression from both fighters, their ferocity, and their willingness to absorb shot after shot in order to land their own were all beyond human understanding.

In their second meeting, on March 2, 2002, at the MGM Grand, do we have a right to expect a repeat performance of what was the best fight of 2000? In a word, no.

These are mortal men, after all. They put so much at risk in their first go-round, they deserve to establish some defense this time instead of advancing with the nonstop intensity of Patton's Third Army.

But how often does anybody get what they deserve? Exactly. So there's every possibility the fighters won't get the more measured fight they deserve and the fans won't get that toned down, crafty chess match.

This is a Mexican thing. That means it's more than just a fight. It's Battle Number Two to establish the identity of the best Mexican fighter out there. Such a champion can never be a dancer. It must be someone who will stand in there and deliver. Barrera and Morales both understand that better than anyone.

But the circumstances of this fight differ from the last one. For starters, they will compete at 126 pounds. That's a clear plus for Morales, who suffered mightily to make 122 in the first contest. In fact, he'd already decided to move to 126, then changed his mind just to get at Barrera.

The valiant Morales seemed to fade ever so slightly in the later rounds of their first contest. That's less likely to happen this time.

For his part, Barrera went up to 126 in the first place only to get a shot at Prince Naseem Hamed. It was a financial decision. If Morales were not the opponent, Barrera would be perfectly content and probably well-advised to continue mopping up 122-pounders.

Although Morales won the first bout, that was only on paper. He fought courageously and with great success, but Barrera fought even better, backing up Morales much of the time and inflicting more damage. Just about everyone who knows the game understands that.

But the fight was in Las Vegas, the promoter was Bob Arum's Top Rank, which represents Morales, and the judges? Well, they were Nevada judges, and as we all know, Nevada is always a gamble. Dalby Shirley and Carol Castellano scored it for Morales, 115-112 and 114-113, respectively. Judge Duane Ford saw it 114-113, Barrera.

Once again Top Rank will be lead promoter. Once again the fight will be in Las Vegas. Presumably, there will be different judges this time. Perhaps they will be sensitive to the injustice perpetrated by their predecessors. Perhaps not. There's even the danger they might go too far and lean toward Barrera to, consciously or unconsciously, right the past wrong.

Nevada judges are inscrutable, and the commission doesn't make much of a commitment to explain why they do the things they do. Though the rosters get scrambled, the same faces keep turning up. But the 2000 robbery was so obvious, it must be taken into consideration in any preview of Barrera-Morales II.

THE RING spoke with Barrera just before he went into training for the second match. We reached him on his cell phone just after he came off a ride at Disneyland, in Southern California.

It was puzzling why he consented to fight Morales again. He has plenty to lose. If Morales, 25, wins, Barrera, who will be 28 in their second bout, will have lost to him twice in the official records.

"I'm fighting him again because the people want to see it," Barrera said. "The fight is just for the people."

We could be crass and suggest he may have been more swayed by the much larger

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

The first encounter between Morales and Barrera was THE RING's Fight of the Year for 2000, an epic battle in which both men fought their hearts out and covered themselves in glory. Is it asking too much to expect the same sort of give-and-take war in the rematch?

purse involved this time. But that wouldn't be altogether correct. Morales, 41-0 (31), and Barrera, 53-3 (38), proved there's much more than cash involved in their rivalry. They just don't like each other and seem to enjoy pounding on one another.

The most radical change from two years ago is the status of the two fighters. In 2000, Morales was undefeated and more highly regarded. Barrera had two losses on his record, both at the hands of Junior Jones, a fighter Morales subsequently dispatched easily via fourth-round knockout.

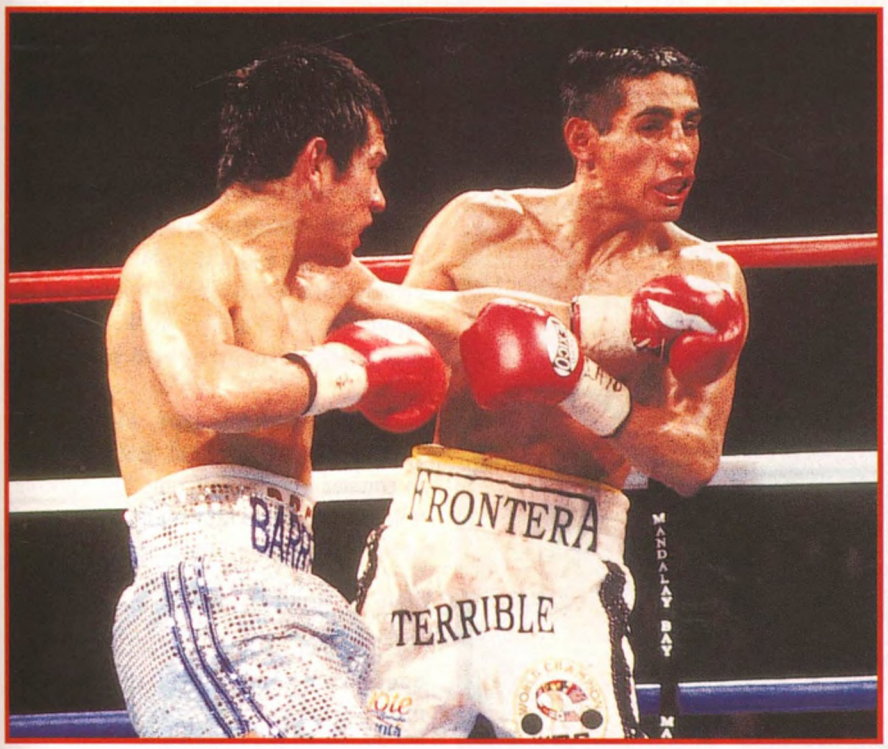
But in 2002, it's Morales with the question mark on his record. He owns the WBC featherweight belt, but he won it with a controversial decision over Guty Espadas in—what a surprise—Las Vegas. In his next outing against In Jin Chi, Morales had to settle for another decision.

Meanwhile, Barrera's career hit the sky when he totally outclassed slugmaster Naseem Hamed. It was a surprise victory over a big-talking, undefeated, devastat-

Against the highly favored Naseem Hamed, Barrera unveiled an extremely effective left jab, which perfectly complimented his often overlooked boxing skills. The upset victory over the previously undefeated Hamed raised the Mexican's popularity to new heights.

PHOTOS BY ANTHONY NESTE/HBO

The sensational see-saw nature of Morales-Barrera I was incredible, with first one and then the other connecting with telling blows. The fact that Morales captured an unpopular split decision was the only sour note in an otherwise magnificent fight.



ing puncher who was a nemesis to Mexican fighters.

Barrera was technically brilliant, following his fight plan to the letter. He knew his trademark left hook to the body wouldn't find its mark as easily against the southpaw Prince, whose elbow tends to shield his liver. So Barrera pulled a surprise weapon out of his arsenal—a

(Continued on page 40)

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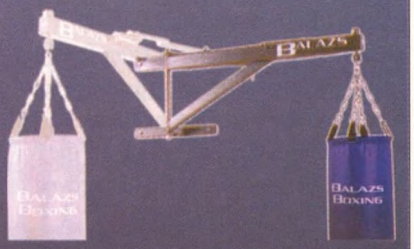

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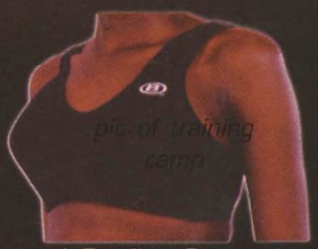

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Barrera-Morales II

(Continued from page 39)

beautiful jab. It made everything else easy. Naz had it in his face all night and couldn't get anything going. Just about every time he came forward, Barrera hurt him. Hamed deserves credit for finishing the fight.

Hamed's loss to Barrera was so devastating, it's possible he will henceforth stay out of North America and ride out the rest of his career fighting journeymen in Britain. He doesn't appear to be coming back to HBO anytime soon.

This time, Barrera will be favored over Morales. "And this time I won't need the judges," Barrera told us.

When fighters emerge from the kind of punishing battle Barrera and Morales waged in their first meeting, there is always the possibility that one or both of them will never be the same. Barrera has proved he's as durable as ever. Morales hasn't.

Like Barrera, Morales projects intense determination and dignity. He knows he got help from the judges last time, and it is his mission to erase that blemish. It should be understood that whatever the judges do, these two classy fighters are miles above it.

Before they fight him, Morales' opponents usually contend he doesn't move well and is rather one-dimensional. But that's not true. Although he works out of a standup stance and is not a tremendously slick boxer, he moves gracefully and punches with excellent timing. He throws loads of powerful combinations and is a great finisher. Just about everything he does well, Morales does very, very well. The taller fighter with slightly better reach, it's in his interest to stay outside this time, which he didn't do last time.

Barrera, although he has trouble with fighters shooting from angles, is probably the better pure boxer—when he wants to be. When he's challenged to a slugfest, he tends to slide in close and trade. Consequently, he's fought more rough fights than was truly necessary.

PHOTO BY HOLLY STEIN/HBO

Since outpointing Barrera at junior featherweight, Morales moved up and decisioned Guty Espadas to win the WBC 126-pound belt. But "El Terrible" didn't look particularly good doing so, and many observers think he got lucky with the judges again, just like in the first Barrera fight.

Pound-for-pound, Barrera has perhaps the finest left hook to the body of anyone fighting today. It's lightning quick and so forceful it seems to shake the arena. The one man who truly beat him, Junior Jones, timed Barrera's hook, and came over it with a straight right. But that's much easier said than done. When opponents get slammed with Barrera's hook, their plans tend to get lost somewhere back in the gym.

Morales has a snappy, jolting right, but the first time around, Barrera tended to counter it well. This time "El Terrible" will have to come up with better moves if he wants to score and escape retribution.

It's in the interest of both men to employ more determined defensive strategies. In fact, if one of them were brave enough to break out of the standard macho trajectory and work diligently off his jab, that's the fighter who would probably go home a winner. But if a war begins, it's not likely either man will opt out. After all, this is a Mexican thing. ■

Ivan Goldman is THE RING'S *West Coast correspondent.*

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Barrera's left hook to the body may be the best in boxing, and it should discourage Morales from coming over the top with his powerful right hand. Jesus Salud, pictured fielding the hook in his December '00 fight with Barrera, certainly had no answer for it.

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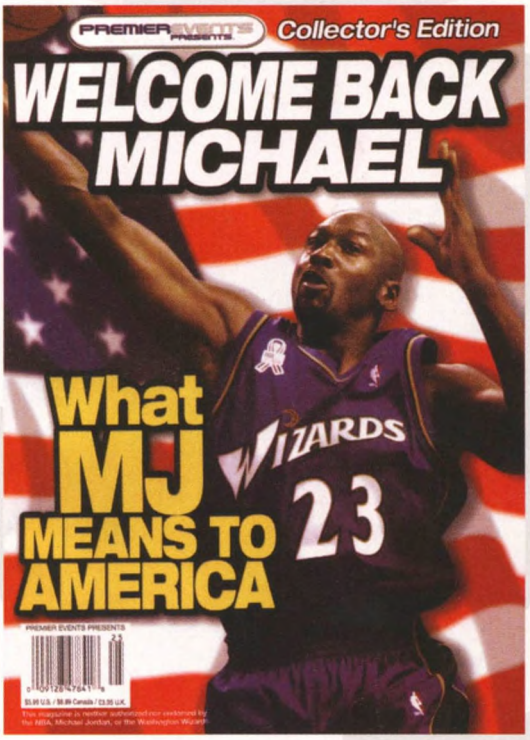

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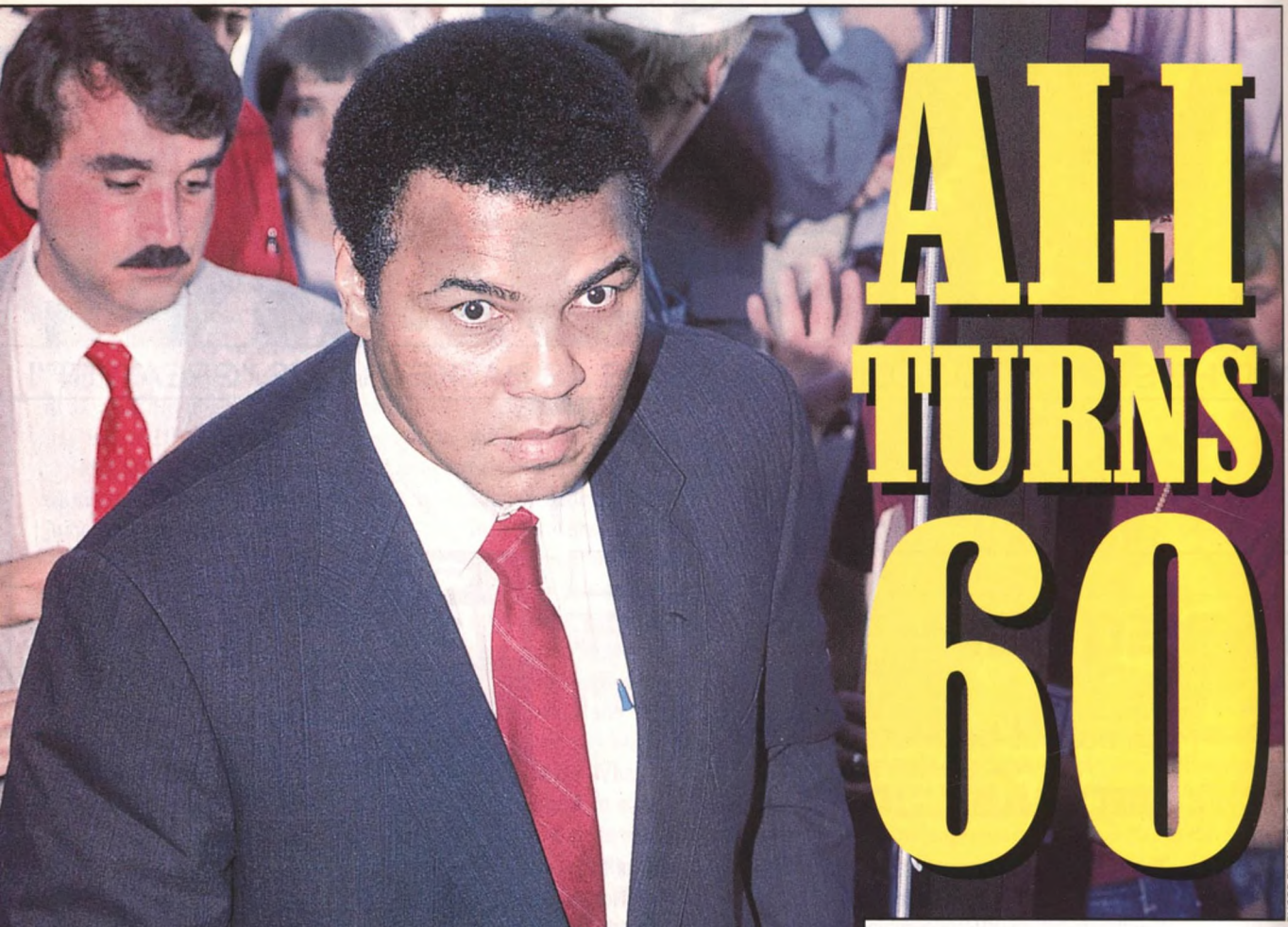


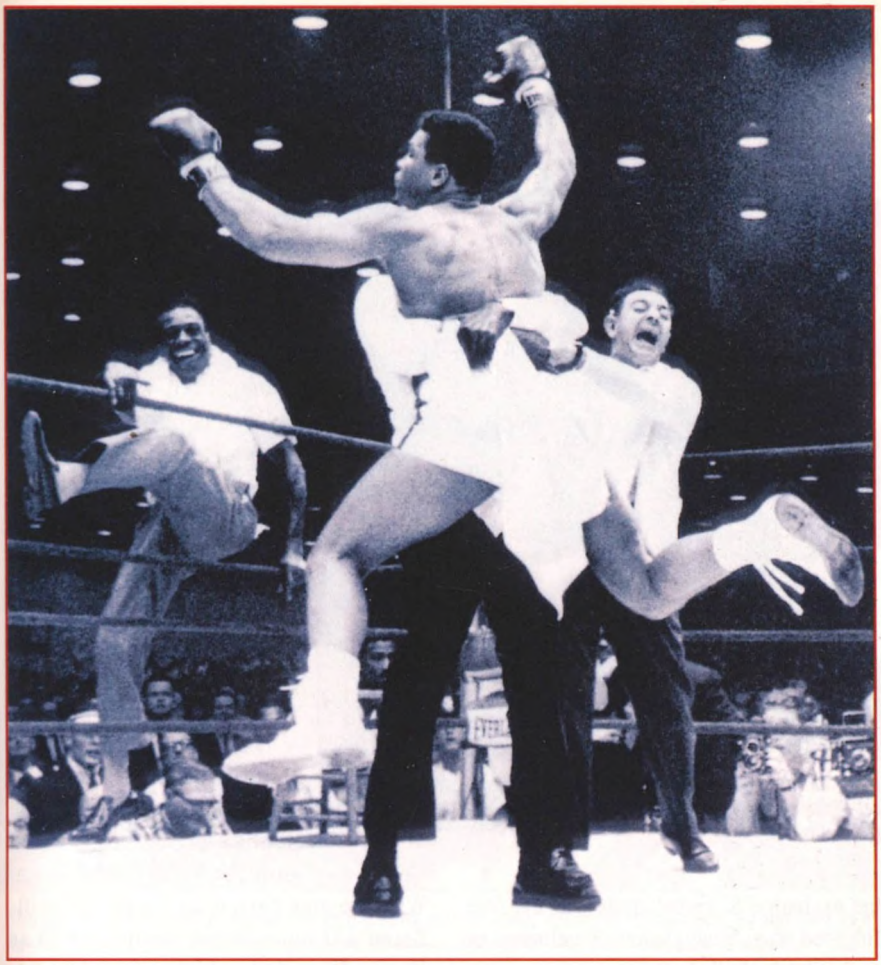
PHOTO BY AL BELLO

By Ted Bodenrader

Close your eyes and you can hear it. The chaos. The pandemonium. Eight thousand people screaming in high-voltage unison. Yet, the only voice you really hear, the only one that truly rivets you, is the one carrying that unmistakable bark of brashness in its tone.

The voice rants crazily through the microphone. It can belong to only one man on this earth. This cocky, baby-faced pug carries on, bearing not a glint of imperfection anywhere on his 210-pound body. His glow is radiant if not blinding, for this kid lights up Miami Beach like the hot summer sun.

Ali walks through the door at the International Boxing Hall of Fame in 1990, the year he was among the inaugural inductees. Over the decades, Ali has come to mean different things to different people, especially to those of diverse generations.



"I am the greatest!" Ali jumps for joy after stopping Sonny Liston to win the heavyweight championship. It was a magical moment that ushered in a new era.

He jabs a fist directly at you, rifling these pointed words, as if they are directed at you and you only. Clenched in these red gloves is the very world that he has just claimed.

"Look at me, I just beat Sonny Liston and I don't have a single mark on my face ... You all eat your words! ... I just shook up the wooooooorld."

Not for a moment does this kid come up for oxygen. After all, his mouth runs on pure octane.

"I just turned 22 years old—only 22 years old—and I'm the heavyweight champion of the world ... the heavyweight champion of the world ... I'm a baaaaaaaad man."

The words that come next echo through the overhead rafters of the Miami Beach Auditorium. They will continue to do so for the four decades that follow.

"I must be the greatest ... I must be the greatest ... must be the greatest!"

We've seen the black and white clip a thousand times through our living room boxes, a young Cassius Clay, hollering just moments after his monumental conquering of the odious Sonny Liston. It was the night a legend was born, when the brash young man backed up this endless dribble with affirmative action, setting in motion a craze that would only gain momentum with each passing year.

Lou Duva remembers the magical moment in 1964 from much closer quarters. The longtime trainer was there in Miami that February night—and in the very first row, no less. He was close enough to see with his very own eyes, as Clay's laser fists landed on Liston's face with amazingly sharp precision. Duva was devoured by both awe and disbelief at what he witnessed during Clay's six-round destruction of the indomitable favorite, as were the pair of burly heavyweights slouched on either side of him.

What Duva remembers most, however, was departing the auditorium with these two bruisers named Joe Louis and Rocky Marciano. Without warning, the trio became swept up into a wave of mad hysteria.

"I look up and Rocky starts running out of the place, like he was going for a workout," said Duva. "He was so inspired by what he had just seen from this kid, it was incredible. And then the next thing you know, Joe Louis starts running right alongside of him. It was like we were all caught up in the magic of the night and there was nothing that could possibly bring us down."

For some, that inspirational "Gonna Fly Now" moment has lasted an entire lifetime. From the sweet days of Sugar Ray Leonard through the era when Mike Tyson angrily ruled the planet, one man's legacy alone has kept this troubled sport afloat.

From generation to generation, we've all been touched in our own special way by

To many of today's youth, the only Ali they know is the trembling Parkinson's victim they saw light the torch at the opening ceremonies of the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta.

Ali's conversion to Islam was controversial to some and an inspiration to others. He's pictured praying at mosque in Frankfurt, Germany (above), where he fought Karl Mildenberger, and preaching to a gathering of the faithful (below) in Houston, Texas, while getting ready to fight Ernie Terrell.

the man who came to be known as Muhammad Ali.

"I remember the first time he walked into the Fifth Street Gym as an amateur," said Duva. "I remember it like it was yesterday, this young kid still learning the ropes, his entire future ahead of him."

That first encounter at the Miami sweatshop would spring a gold mine of precious memories for Duva and the rest of us, unforgettable encounters with Liston, Jimmy Ellis, Jerry Quarry, Ken Norton, George Foreman—a zoo of countless predators that Ali tamed one by one. And of course, there was the Gorilla. After all, it wouldn't be a thrilla without the Gorilla.

Ali's trilogy with Smokin' Joe Frazier set the new standard for boxing excellence, providing a spark of theater that only Hollywood had thus far been able to provide. The only ammo more lethal than the exchange of verbal shots was the five-fingered ones these gladiators unloaded on each other's skulls in the ring.

When Ali wasn't picking a fight with Smokin' Joe, he was going at it with Oscar Bonavena, Floyd Patterson, Ernie Terrell, everyone and anyone who stood in his path to greatness. Heck, sometimes that somebody was even Howard Cosell, the "truculent" man with the mike. But it didn't really matter who the other guy was. When Muhammad Ali was involved, there was only one man in charge.

"He was the promoter, the fighter, the seller, he was everything rolled up into one," said Duva. "It didn't matter who was promoting the thing. It was Muhammad's show. He was a thing of beauty, that kid."

Today, of course, everything is different. Some 40 years have passed since the spunky pretty boy walked into the Fifth Street Gym. What we now have is no longer the swift-fisted kid once known to the world as Cassius Clay. Today, Muhammad Ali hardly even resembles that 22-year-old icon.

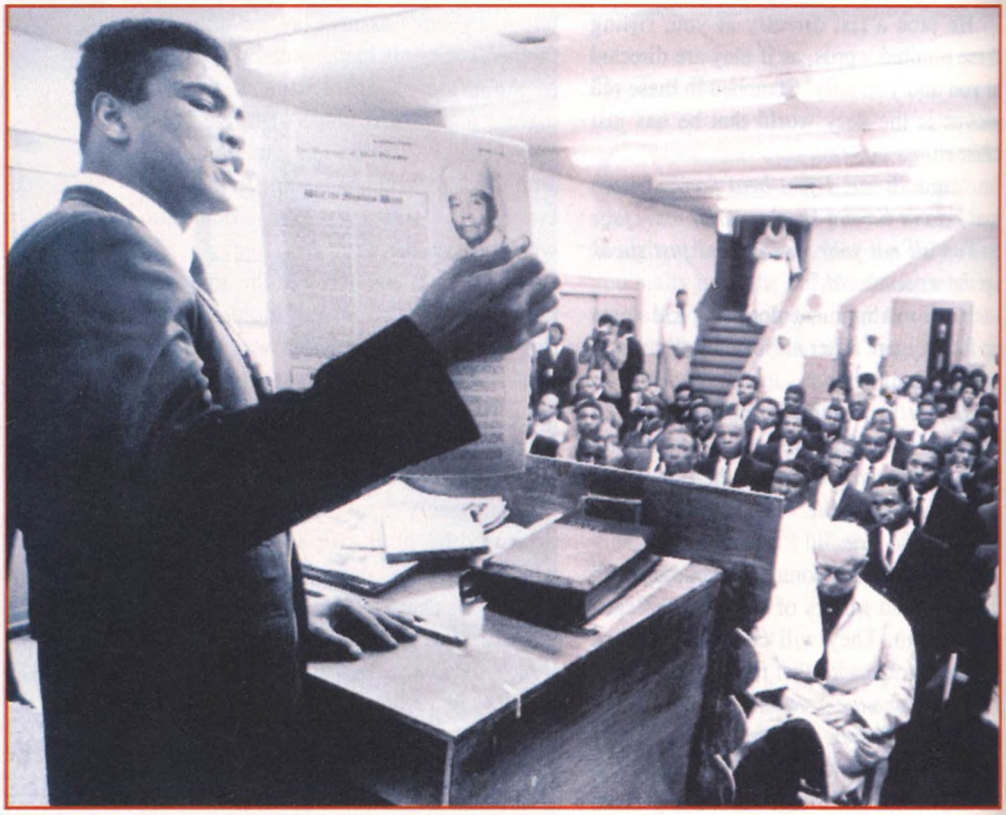


PHOTO BY JASON ROSS LAVIN

Still the people's champ: Never out of the spotlight for long, Ali signs autographs for his fans at a fight in Atlantic City. Whenever he enters an arena, chants of "Ali! Ali!" are sure to follow.

In fact, on January 17, 2002, he turned 60. His once-pretty face is now lined with wrinkles, his electric eyes now distant and dull. He no longer floats like a butterfly. Instead, he trembles like a leaf.

Yet, even under the power of Parkinson's disease, somehow, this living legend and three-time heavyweight king has never been more treasured. Young 'uns like ESPN's Max Kellerman weren't around to witness what Duva saw that mystical night in Miami Beach. He wasn't there to see Liston, the once-invincible bully, reduced to mere rubble.

Still, even the computer generation from which Kellerman is sprung understands the importance of Ali's stature in both a political and historical sense.

"I was only five years old when Ali fought Leon Spinks," said Kellerman. "All I remember was that he was idolized, it seemed, by everyone I knew. To me, his name was just one word. It was Muhammadali. And I think that's the way my generation knows him. He's been lionized so much that he's almost like a fantasy to us."

Fantasy or reality, through millions of sets of eyes, Ali has come to represent an endless array of dimensions. When you're the heavyweight champion of the world, your appeal can often times transcend the sporting world. In the case of Muhammad Ali, he practically transcended mankind.

"He is looked at almost like a Christ figure," said Kellerman. "He was a guy who dedicated his entire life to helping people out. He sacrificed his flesh, so to speak, for all of us and for what he believed in. He was crucified by the establishment, he comes back from the dead a few years later, and is more popular than ever. Now he's looked upon as being a saint."

Yet, Ali is not a man of Christ. He is a man of Allah. And to the Muslim world, he is also a preacher. He preached to millions of the Islamic values, urging black members to stake their own claim in the United States and sway far from immigration.

When Floyd Patterson challenged the champ's religious views in 1965, Ali

(Continued on page 46)

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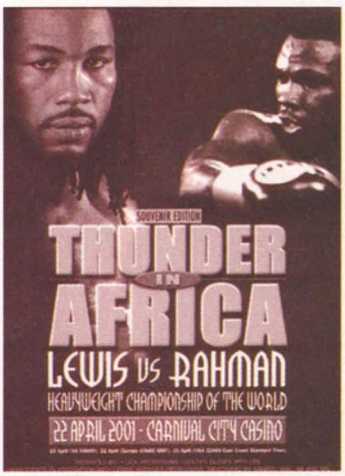

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Muhammad Ali

(Continued from page 45)

responded in the form of a brutal 12-round spanking. Shortly after, like Ali himself, thousands of Muslims changed their names to reflect their religious convictions.

To the black community, he is an ethnic leader. He spoke loud and often to halls packed with his oppressed brothers and sisters, guiding them through the hardships of everyday life. He urged an entire race to remain upright and strong, anointing them as fighters in the struggles that faced them each and every day.

To his country, he was a rebellious leader, and a highly controversial one. When Ali refused induction into the armed forces during the Vietnam War, he was sharply labeled, by many, though not all, as a coward and a traitor. As time wore on, and his three-year exile from boxing ticked away, things swiftly changed. Although from April 1967 to October 1970, he never saw a moment of combat, neither in the ring nor on the battlefield, his sacrificial actions reshaped this maverick into a national hero.

PHOTO BY JAY LASH

Don King is all smiles as Ali takes a playful poke at the promoter during a trip to Ecuador in 1994.

To sports figures, he became a true pioneer, a genius who blended the blow business with show business like nobody else before him. His prefight razzle and showtime dazzle were like high-powered magnets, gluing butts to the seats and eyes on the prize. It was the kind of stuff that made jocks entertainers, springing multimillion-dollar contracts into the realm of normalcy. Guys like John McEnroe, Charles Barkley, and Deion Sanders have since tried to emulate his touch. Of course, compared to Ali, "Prime Time" is little more than a midnight rerun.

Yet, with each passing generation, the sparkle of this sports jewel glistens further in the past. Nonetheless, it is still sparkling, perhaps like never before.

"He's bigger than ever, if you ask me," said Kellerman.

To much of today's youth, however, their personal experiences of Ali may be little more than watching a shaky old man light the Olympic torch five years ago in Atlanta. He is more like something that you read about in a history book, like Malcolm X or Martin Luther King. He is but a prehistoric artifact, and perhaps it takes a young hotshot like Will Smith to bring him back to life, like he does in the movie *Ali*.

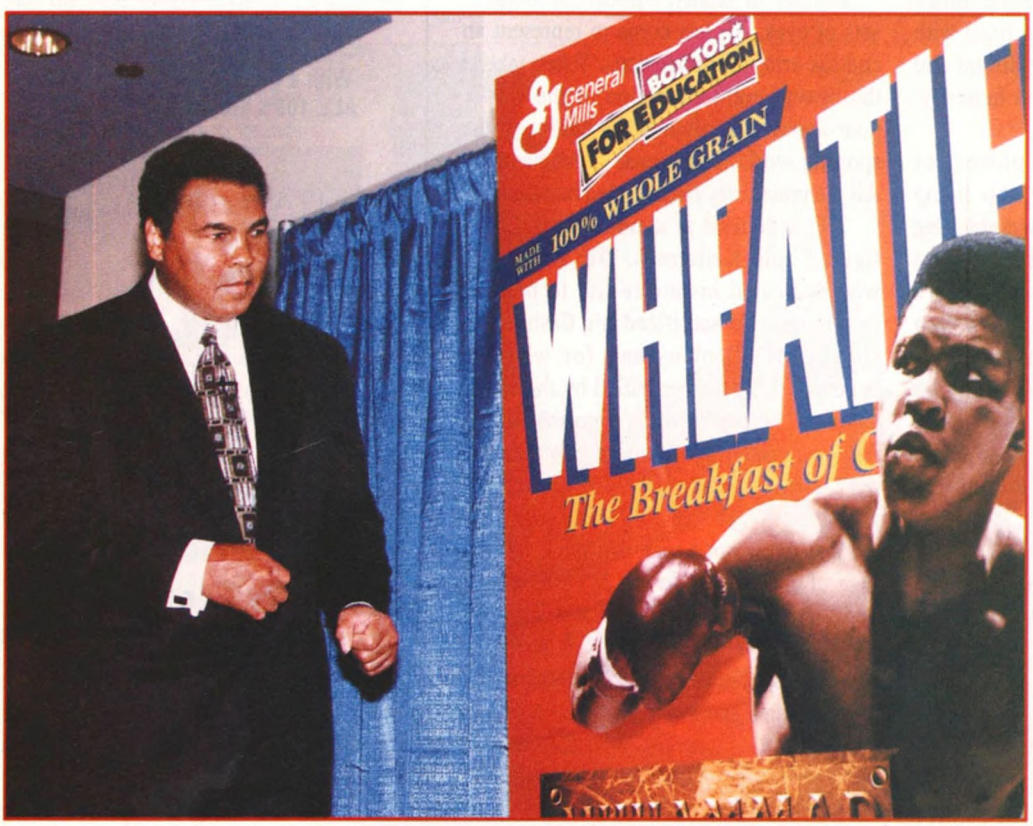


PHOTO BY TEDDY BLACKBURN

The honors continue to accumulate, and in 1999 Ali became the first boxer to grace a Wheaties box.

PHOTO BY TEDDY BLACKBURN

Ali and wife Lonnie celebrate the new millennium at New York City's famous Times Square. But no matter what century it is, Ali will always remain one of the world's athletic and cultural icons.

Yet, when this aging man struggles onto a stage, his once-vibrant chatter reduced to a mere mumble, many still can't help but sympathize with him. In today's sports world, immortality is best personified by the beloved Michael Jordan. In Ali, many see a sick and aging man, both troubled and weak.

"Yeah, they may feel a little sorry for him," said Kellerman. "But if you ask me, with the older generation and the people who actually lived through his prime, I think the one they really feel sorry for is themselves. It's like when you lose a loved one, you cry because you miss them. People miss Ali for the way he once was."

What we miss is the one-man phenomenon who launched us on a new thrill ride nearly every day. Today, it would take an entire arsenal of celebrities to match his capacity and his wit. And, of course, the boxing biz utterly starves for just a morsel of his magic.

"These guys out there today, they try to be like him, but it's a lost cause, a waste of time," said Duva, with a laugh. "Nobody will ever be like Ali. Not in the ring or outside of it. Not in my lifetime, at least."

The mere memory of prime Ali always forms a grin on Duva's lips. He was a poet, you know it, and not afraid to show it. He had taste and grace, but was always in your face. When he wasn't teaching, he was preaching. When he wasn't training, he was entertaining.

"He always had something going on, some good, some not so good," said Duva. "But whatever he was doing, he was always having an effect on people."

Sometimes, he sparked an entire revolution or a national uproar. Other times, he could simply spark a couple of friends—even famous ones like Marciano and Louis—to get up and start running.

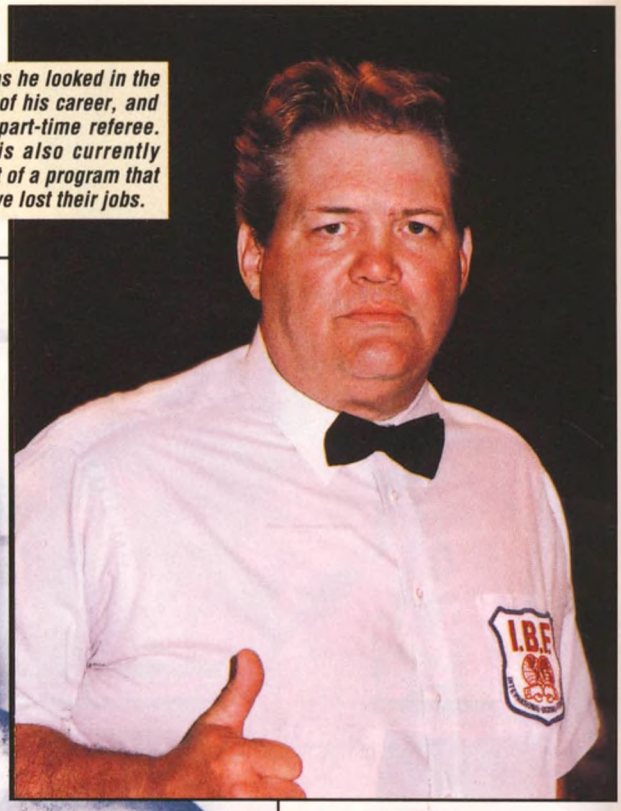
Through the millions of pairs of eyes that have long been cast upon this man, the many things Ali stood for will never be forgotten. A pioneer, a genius, a relic, and an original. A troublemaker, a loudmouth, a draft dodger, even a lunatic.

But it doesn't quite matter what side of Ali you were on. It doesn't matter if you know him through a VHS video or even from the shadows of the Fifth Street Gym. As we absorb the endless line of books and movies that are forever coming our way, there is surely one thing we can all universally agree upon when it comes to this golden American treasure: This man must have really been The Greatest.

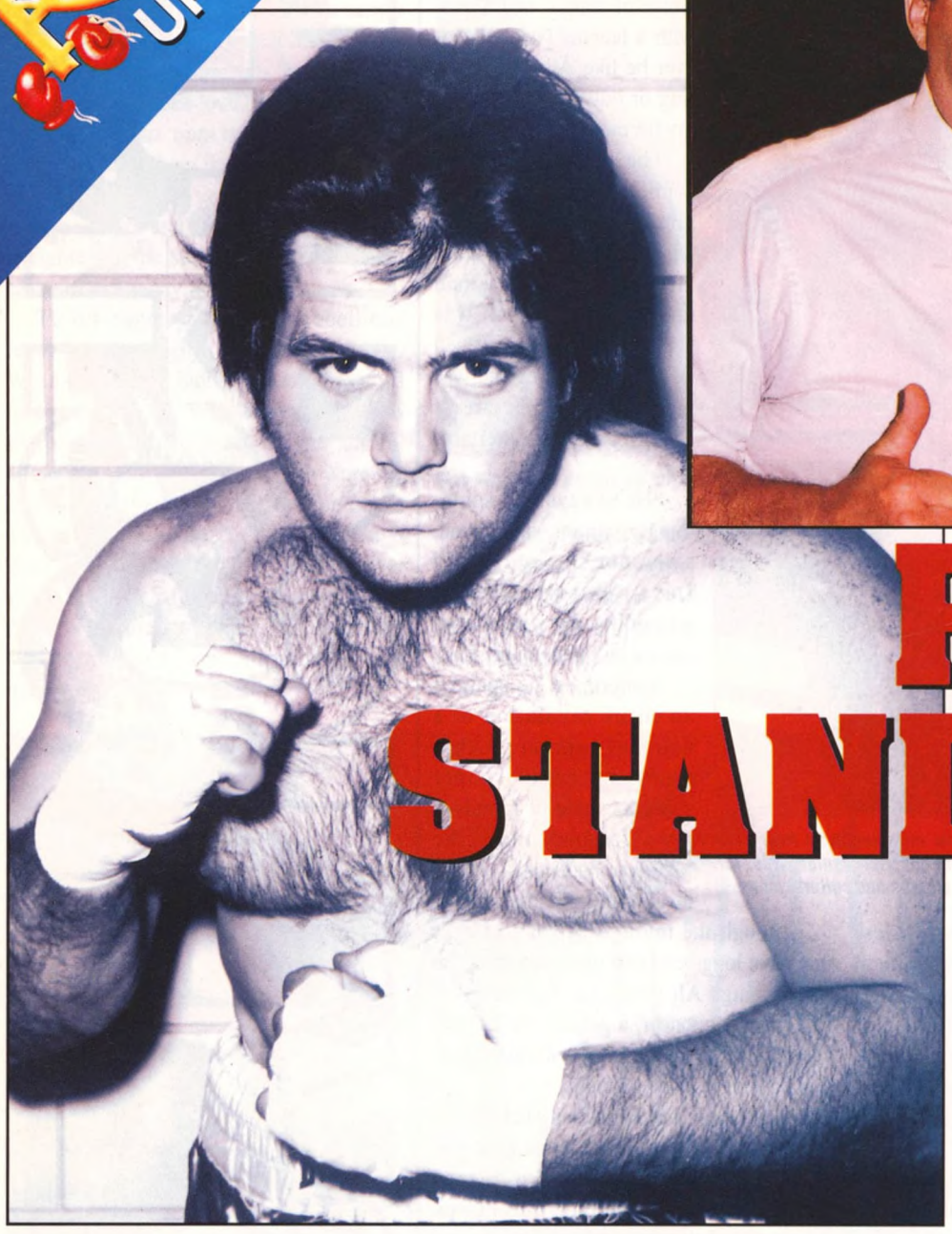
Happy Birthday, Muhammad Ali. ■

Ted Bodenrader is a freelance writer living in Boston and a regular contributor to this magazine.

The RING UPDATE:



Then and now: Stander as he looked in the early-1970s at the peak of his career, and today as a 55-year-old part-time referee. "The Bluffs Butcher" is also currently attending college as part of a program that retrains workers who have lost their jobs.



RON STANDER

"I'd Knock Frazier Out In A Minute If We Fought Tonight"

By Pete Ehrmann

Like most comebacks, the one ex-heavyweight title challenger Ron Stander is attempting at age 55 has had its share of peaks and valleys.

"I had a real hard test this week," said "The Bluffs Butcher" from his home in Omaha, Nebraska. "I got a 74 on it. But I've been getting 100s."

Unlike most comebacks, this one is entirely praiseworthy because it doesn't involve fighting "anything human and most animals," which Stander frequently and probably only half-kiddingly declared his willingness to do when he was one of boxing's most colorful hardcases and the greatest drawing card in Nebraska ring history.

The brawler who waded straight into Joe Frazier in their heavyweight title match 30 years ago is now putting his head to use attending Vatterott College from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. every Monday through Thursday. He's studying heating and refrigeration, but not because Stander had always dreamed about that even more than planting one on Smokin' Joe's squash. He wouldn't be doing

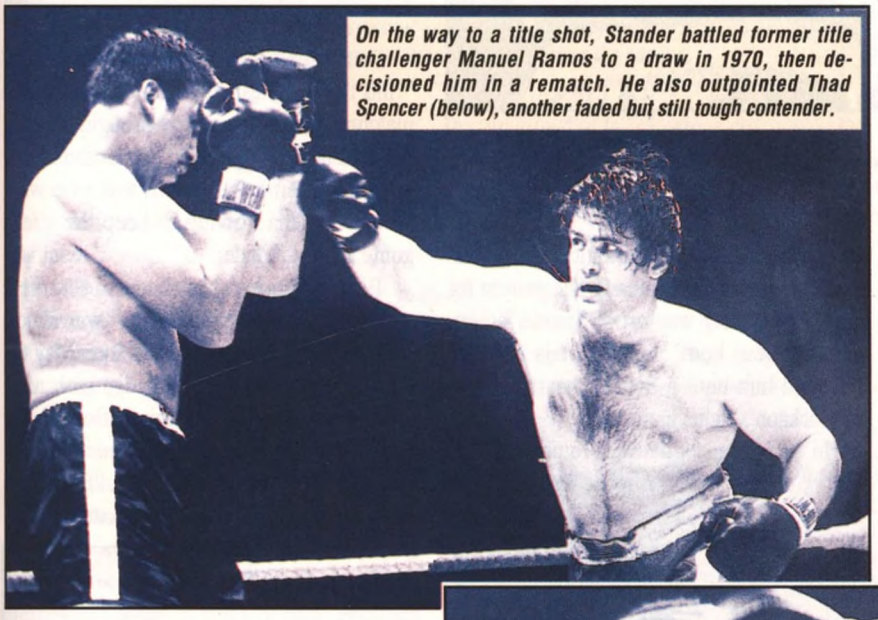
it at all if the $19-an-hour machinist's job Stander had at the Vicker's plant in Omaha hadn't gone south, literally, when the world's largest hydraulic manufacturing operation suddenly headed to Mexico to plunge into the cheap labor pool opened up by the NAFTA treaty.

Now Stander, his wife, Becky, and their sons Ryan, 12, and Rowan, 11, get by on the $252 Ron is paid to learn a new trade.

"It's fate—I'm not meant to have money, I guess," said the genial Stander.

On the night of May 25, 1972, Stander's first wife ventured a not-so-genial but similarly pessimistic assessment of his qualifications for occupying the same ring as Frazier. In fact, Darlene Stander's angry rant to *Sports Illustrated's* Mark Kram—"You don't enter a Volkswagen in the Indy 500 unless you know a hell of a shortcut!"—may be remembered today more than the fight itself.

In what seems like a gigantic upset in retrospect, Stander hands Earnie Shavers his first pro defeat. Stander somehow survived the vicious-punching Shavers' early assault and rallied back to stop the exhausted slugger in the fifth round.



On the way to a title shot, Stander battled former title challenger Manuel Ramos to a draw in 1970, then decisioned him in a rematch. He also outpointed Thad Spencer (below), another faded but still tough contender.

But Stander—a 10-1 underdog that night who needed 17 stitches to close the cuts Frazier opened on his face—would like to correct the impression that it was the heavyweight champion who stopped him in four rounds.

"He didn't whip me; the doctor stopped the fight," he said. "I was ready to go on, and that's what irritates me. There was no knockdown."

Indeed, after the fight, Stander says he invited the winner-and-still-champion out in the alley behind the Omaha Civic Auditorium to continue their argument without any doctor around to fret about loss of blood, nor a referee to quibble about tactics.

"I wrestled in college. I'd take him right down and snap his neck," said The Butcher.

Constrained by rope, rules, and meddlesome officials, Stander did his best with the equipment he was issued.

"At 5'11" tall, with a 70-inch reach, what you gonna do? Dance and move? I was a face fighter," said Stander, who accordingly ended up taking some 200 stitches and suffering "four or five broken noses" in a 14-year, 37-21-3 (28) pro career.

"Nobody ever missed Ron," said Tom Lovgren, Nebraska's premier boxing historian and a onetime correspondent for THE RING, who was involved in Stander's career from the start. "The amazing thing is, a lot of guys take all those punches and they're never

Stander became the state of Nebraska's all-time biggest drawing card during his heyday. Among his victims was "Giant" Jack O'Halloran, pictured absorbing a Stander right to the ribs. Bodypunching was always a big part of Stander's game.

the same. But it never affected Ronnie."

It sure affected boxing in the Cornhusker State, which never before nor since had had a magnet like the pudgy, fearless former college football player who, in Lovgren's words, "did a better job of putting asses in seats than anybody in Omaha," and gave fans "thrills like no fighter has in modern times."

Born in Ft. Jackson, South Carolina, on October 17, 1944 (the same day, Stander points out, as his equally dauntless friend, Evel Knievel), Stander moved to Council Bluffs, Iowa, across the Missouri River from Omaha, when he was a boy. At Abraham Lincoln High School he was a standout on the varsity football team, and once tackled future gridiron Hall of Famer Gale Sayers. ("It should also be mentioned," wrote Lovgren, "that Ron must have missed Gale many times that day because Gale scored five touchdowns for Omaha Central against Lincoln.")

When college didn't work out, Stander started working at Vickers, and to take off some excess poundage he followed some friends to Gene Buzzello's boxing gym in the basement of the Fox Hole Bar. (Later the joke would be that Stander spent more time upstairs than downstairs, but that was part of his Tony Galento-reincarnation image tailored for the national press.) The pattern for his whole career was set in Stander's very first amateur bout, when Morris Jackson pounded him until a Stander haymaker put out Jackson's lights in the third.

In 1969, Stander defeated future pro football star Lyle Alzado in the local Golden Gloves, and went all the way to the quarterfinals in the national tournament in Kansas City, Missouri. But an even bigger thrill was when former world heavyweight champion Rocky Marciano borrowed his boxing shoes for a stint as a guest referee in the tournament. Stander still has the shoes, which he figures "might be the last pair of boxing shoes Marciano had on, because he died shortly after that in Newton, Iowa."

Filling Marciano's shoes was the plan when Stander started down the professional road that same year. He kayoed his first four opponents before Joe Byrd, father of the current heavyweight contender Chris Byrd, lasted six rounds. By the time Stander flattened Joe Harris for his eighth straight win in early-1970, Wally Provost, sports editor of the *Omaha World-Herald*, noted the rising attendance figures and gate receipts for his fights and wrote, "An Omaha sports phenomenon appears to be in the making."

Instructed by manager Dick Noland to "find the toughest guy you can for Ron," matchmaker Lovgren next brought to town an Ohio heavyweight who'd knocked out all 13 of the men he'd beaten, and who went around Omaha vowing to keep the streak going against Stander.

Earnie Shavers, perhaps the hardest puncher in heavyweight history, was almost right. In the first two rounds of their May 11, 1970, bout, Shavers "ripped punch after punch into his wild-swinging, floundering rival," according to a first-hand report by Lew Eskin in *Boxing Illustrated*. "Before the first round was over, Ron was cut by a left

The promoters hired former heavyweight contender "Two Ton" Tony Galento to tour with Stander during the build-up to The Butcher's May 25, 1972, title fight with Joe Frazier. Like Galento, Stander was a two-fisted brawler who liked his beer.

Stander gave it everything he had against Frazier, and never went down. But the doctor stopped the fight when the cuts the challenger suffered grew too severe to allow him to continue. Stander is still resentful that the fight was stopped without him ever hitting the canvas.

hook over the right eye, and bled from the nose and mouth, his body as reddened, and he was made to stumble from a combination of Earnie's crisp punches and his own awkwardness."

It was scary all right, Stander says.

"Everything hurt. My brain told my body, 'Don't get hit anymore by this guy!' I think I was going into shock. I was in fear of my life because he hit so hard."

But Shavers, who would go on to destroy Ken Norton, knock down Larry Holmes, and wobble Muhammad Ali during a career in which he stopped 67 of the 71 boxers he beat, could dent but not bring down the immovable force in front of him. Between the effort he expended trying and the body-punches Stander began to land in the third, Shavers was totally spent by round five, when Stander put him down for the count, to the hysterical delight of the 4,627 hometown fans.

"Stander is a throwback to the Graziano, Marciano type who gets hit, bleeds, and then comes back to flatten his rivals," wrote Eskin. "He has an awful lot to learn, but remember the name—Ron Stander."

The wins kept coming and the crowds kept growing for The Butcher, who changed his nickname from "The Bomber" out of deference to Joe Louis, who first had it. In his first 10-rounder, on September 17, 1970, Stander fought a stirring draw against former title challenger Manuel Ramos, before a record crowd of 6,277, which contributed the largest gate in Omaha ($22,718) since Jack Dempsey swung through town on an exhibitions tour 39 years earlier. They saw what Lovgren ranks as one of the greatest fights in local boxing history.

"We used six-ounce gloves," Stander said. "It was brutal. He was a tough counter-puncher with a good chin. He probably beat me, I'd say, but it could've gone either way."

A rematch in Omaha a year later, won by Stander on points, drew 8,821 fans. Also in '71, Stander won a decision over former top contender Thad Spencer and beat huge Jack O'Halloran, among others. These were tough, learning experiences that were anything but tuition-free to a fighter of the face-first persuasion. Shopworn but trained to the nines, Spencer didn't just cut Stander, but opened up a vein in his forehead that, by the end of the fight, made the hometown boy look more butchered than Butcher. Against '64 Pan-American Games champion Lee Carr and New England heavyweight titlist Jesse Crown that same year, Stander was also cut within a millimeter or two of being stopped before lowering the boom.

A big name who passed on the opportunity to get in on the blood-letting was Floyd Patterson. In July of '71, after the two-time former heavyweight ruler fought Terry Daniels in Cleveland, Stander's manager, Dick Noland, was in the process of setting up a fight with Stander when heavyweight Harold Carter, who'd fought several times in Omaha, walked into Patterson's dressing room and warned the former champ, "You don't want to fight a goddamn bodypuncher like Stander. He'll hurt you." Patterson

Stander and trainer Johnny Duff after the Frazier fight. "Smokin' Joe" busted up Stander so badly, it took 17 stitches to close his wounds. After losing the biggest fight of his career, Stander lost more than he won and never again rose above journeyman status.

looked elsewhere for his next fight.

When he dropped a weird split decision to Rico Brooks on January 22, 1972, for his first loss as a pro (one judge called seven of the 10 rounds even), it turned out to be a good career move for Stander. Without that loss on his record, says Lovgren, Stander would likely not have been considered for a title match with Frazier.

"Yank Durham had Frazier then," Lovgren said. "He'd just beaten Ali and was looking for an easy way to make a half-million dollars."

Not confident that the match could stand on its own, ABC bought it as part of a package deal to air live after the broadcast of the American Basketball Association All-Star Game.

The hype played up Stander's fondness for beer, and he went on a public relations junket with old "Two Ton" Galento himself, the portly, suds-swilling, "I'll-moider-the-bum" Neanderthal who'd dropped Joe Louis in their 1938 title fight. "A jovial fellow," recalled Stander of his companion. "We had a lot of laughs."

For training, Stander went to Boston to work with trainer Johnny Dunn, who, according to Lovgren, "probably got as much out of him as he could get."

Dunn was realistic. "This fight ain't going six rounds," he told Lovgren. "Either Stander will hit him and knock Frazier out by then, or Frazier will cut him up and the referee will be forced to stop it."

Somebody—not CompuBox, which wasn't around then—counted 115 power-shots landed by the champion in the 12 minutes of action viewed by a new-and-still-standing record crowd of 9,863 that sweltering night. But Stander and Lovgren insist it was no slam-duck for Frazier.

"In the first round I drilled him, but then I kinda waited for him to fall, and instead, he came back with a left hook," said Stander.

Added Lovgren: "A lot of people say Frazier lost his balance in the first, but he was being hit with a right hand at the same time. He was a punch away from losing the title. In training, Ron worked and worked on his right uppercut. In the second or third, he missed by a quarter-inch. I said, 'That's it.' Frazier was no fool. He did a lot more boxing after that instead of walking into battle."

After losing to Frazier, Stander says he lost the desire to work hard and, even more significantly, Lovgren adds, also "the ability to refuse to accept defeat."

"I was depressed, I suppose," Stander said. "I wanted to win and tried as hard as I could. I let people down, I thought."

But he soldiered on in the ring, mostly because "it beat working, I guess."

Although he subsequently won the Nebraska state title against his toughest local rival, Morris Jackson (the man he beat in his first amateur fight), Stander never really got out of the journeyman class after that, and lost more often than he won.

Some of the losses, insists The Butcher, were pure baloney.

"Scott LeDoux (L 10), they stole that. Rodney Bobick (L 10), they stole that. After the LeDoux fight, promoter Ben Sternberg said, 'Here's $500 extra; you just got robbed.'"

Against Ken Norton, the future WBC champion, "I had a little three-stitch cut and they stopped it. He was fadin' on me in the fifth, and they stopped it. Two more rounds and I'd have had Norton out of there like Earnie Shavers."

South Africa's Gerrie Coetzee is credited with a kayo over Stander, but the way the loser recollects the July '76 fight against the future WBA champion is that Pat O'Grady, who booked the fight for him and worked his corner in Johannesburg, "threw the towel in behind my back in the eighth round. I kicked it out, but they said it was over."

But today The Butcher's attitude about that is the same as when he looks in the mirror at the scars inflicted by Frazier.

"When I see the scars now, I just say to myself, 'Oh, pull your pants up. Life goes on. Just go to Mass and pray harder.'"

That's what he told a local newspaper reporter when Frazier came through Omaha last summer, and the town got all excited again by the reunion of these two gnarly head-bangers who made Omaha the centerpiece of the boxing world for one night.

They're friends now, although Stander, now a more robust than ever 275 pounds, declares, "I'd knock Frazier out in a minute if we fought tonight."

In fact: "I'd fight anybody my own age for any amount of money. Any human and most animals."

He said the last part with a chuckle, knowing those days are long past. The only time Stander steps between the ropes anymore, it's for an occasional refereeing assignment somewhere on the midwest fight circuit. This good, resilient man is hitting only books now, in what may be his most gutsy, impressive fight of all.

"It's tough. I thought I knew something," Stander said. "It's got me mind-boggled, but we'll get it."

The old VW may be dinged up a bit on the outside, but under the hood the engine is still revved up and running at Indy speed.

"He goes to college in the morning," said Becky Stander, "and in the afternoon—look out! He gets his tennis shoes on, and you can't slow him down." ■

Pete Ehrmann is a freelance writer living in West Allis, Wisconsin, and a regular contributor to this magazine.

Ryan, Ron, Becky, and Rowan Stander pose for a recent family picture. Mrs. Stander calls the former contender "the greatest husband, father, friend, and role model out of the Midwest."

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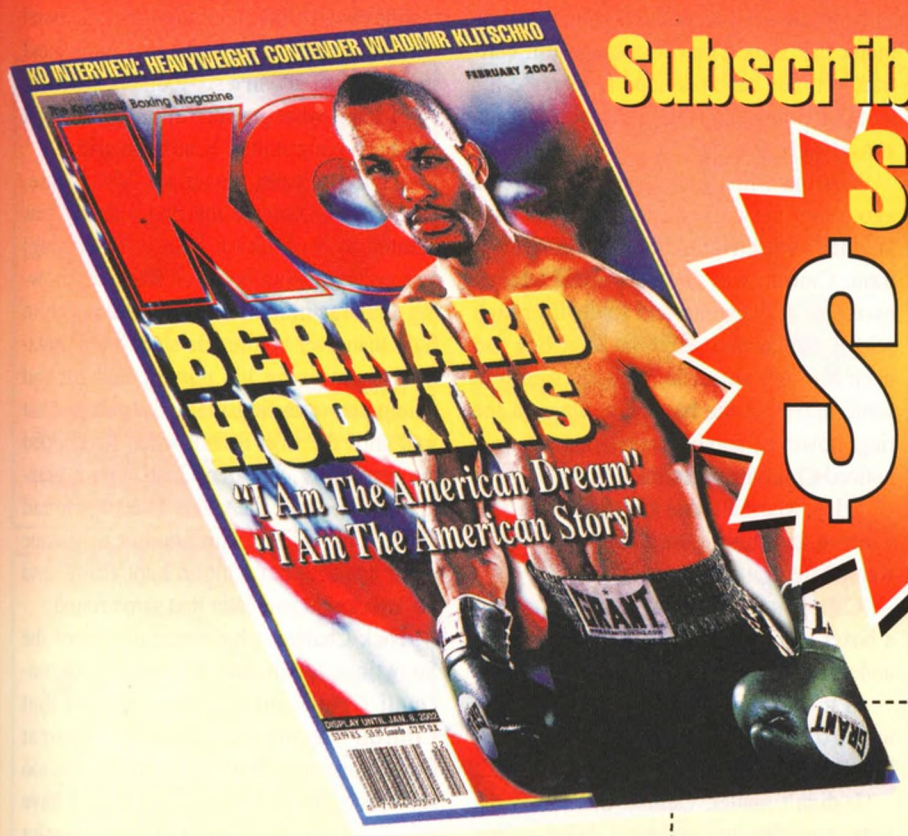

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'60s & '70s ISSUES

With Muhammad Ali, Carlos Monzon, Jose Napoles, and Roberto Duran leading the way, the 1960s and 1970s was surely a star-studded era. The Ring, of course, was around to cover all of these superstars and their superbouts. A limited supply of back issues from those decades are still available for $10 each (including postage and handling).

❑ **July 1965: Jose Torres, Puerto Rico's New Hero.** Plus: Clay-Liston II prefight, Gene Tunney, Joey Giardello, Bonavena-Folley, George Chuvalo.

❑ **April 1967: Death Stalks The Tiger.** Plus: Cassius Clay, Emile Griffith, Mike Jacobs, Barney Ross.

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❑ **Jan. 1968: Corbett-Dempsey Computer Fight.** Plus: Joe Frazier, Jerry Quarry, Jimmy Ellis, Thad Spencer, Vicente Saldivar retires.

❑ **Dec. 1968: Is World Boxing Association Crumbling?** Plus: Ellis-Patterson, George Chuvalo, Kid Gavilan, Bob Foster.

❑ **Sept. 1977: Norton-Young: Winner To Fight Ali!** Plus: Sugar Ray Leonard, Michael and Leon Spinks, John Tate, Palomino-Green, Galindez-Kates II, Wilfredo Gomez, Irish-American fighters.

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New Face

(Continued from page 18)

more than anything, because I want him to have a long career."

Both Top Rank and Main Events have shown some interest in Cintron, but no promoter has signed him to a long-term contract yet. His handlers hope to increase his level of competition this year with a crack at a ranked contender.

Kauffman first met Cintron three years ago when he walked into the gym with another young fighter Kauffman used to train. Cintron was an exceptional athlete, excelling at wrestling and football in high school, but his only exposure to boxing had been through an uncle, who showed him some moves in the basement. Once in the ring, however, another trainer immediately noticed Cintron's potential.

"Hey, Marshall, that kid right there, that Cintron kid, he's going to be all right," Kauffman recalled being told.

Cintron's first amateur fight was against a boxer who already had 10 amateur fights under his belt and was a southpaw to boot.

"I'm thinking, *he ain't ready for this guy with 10 fights*," Kauffman remembered. "Kermit had only been boxing for a month."

It didn't matter. Cintron dominated the fight, knocking the opponent down several times and winning a decision.

Kauffman and Cintron separated for about eight months when Cintron began training at another gym, and his first two pro fights, in October of 2000, were under another trainer. But Cintron and Kauffman were soon reunited, and they've been inseparable ever since. Kauffman has become a father figure, and co-trainer Joe Pastore is Cintron's surrogate brother. The fighter trades off living with both of them.

Born in Puerto Rico, Cintron moved to Pennsylvania to live with his uncle at age eight, following the death of his mother from cancer. His father died as the result of heart problems when he was 13. Their untimely deaths still pain Cintron.

"I think about it all the time," Cintron said. "It's like, man, I wish they were here to see what I'm doing right now."

Pastore said Cintron is a dream to train, a fighter who works diligently and learns quickly.

"There are a lot of guys out there with talent, but they get caught up with drinking or smoking or girls or drugs or they get in trouble in school," said Pastore. "Cintron presents none of those problems."

Cintron isn't a frontrunner and has shown resilience when faced with adversity. Against Leon Pierson last May, Cintron fought most of the bout with just one hand after injuring his right in the first round, and still managed to win a six-round decision.

"I think what got him through that fight was his boxing skills," Kauffman said.

Against Said Ouali on Showtime, Cintron (who entered the ring with his hair painted to look like a Puerto Rican flag) was nervous about being on *ShoBox*, knowing that far more people would see him fight than ever before. He started out tentatively, not using his power, and looked unimpressive during the early going. That was until the fifth round, when he clipped the previously unbeaten Ouali with a grazing left hook to the chin. The punch had Ouali flailing in a vain attempt to escape more damage, but Cintron kept firing, and the knockout came later that same round.

Nick Charles, who served as one of the Showtime commentators for the Cintron-Ouali fight, said he likes the fact that Cintron "seems very driven." Against Ouali, however, Charles thought he was too cautious in the early going and should have pressured his opponent with the jab a lot more than he did.

"He proved to me that he can win a fire fight," said Charles. "He really was able to just turn it on. I thought he did just a great job of jumping Ouali and finishing him."

Even so, Charles believes it's time to see what Cintron can do against higher caliber fighters.

"You've got to test him more, he's got to fight some durable guys who can take a whack, who can punch with him a little bit," said Charles.

Cintron said he's in no hurry, but eventually he would love to fight Six Heads Lewis, whom he claims he embarrassed in a training camp sparring session. But before he's ready for such a significant jump up in class, some intermediate steps need to be taken.

"We're going to take our time," said Cintron. "I think it's going to take fighting the right guys. I'm not rushing it." ■

Leonard N. Fleming is a staff writer for the Philadelphia Inquirer.

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SUMMARY

HEAVYWEIGHTS

Lennox Lewis KO 4 Hasim Rahman
(Regains WBC & IBF Heavyweight Titles)
Jameel McCline W 12 Lance Whitaker
Fres Oquendo KO 3 David Izon
Oliver McCall KO 10 Henry Akinwande
Oleg Maskaev KO 6 David Vedder
Sergei Liakhovich W 12 Friday Ahunanya
Derrick Jefferson KO 1 Eric Curry
Brian Nielsen W 8 Ken Murphy
Shannon Briggs KO 1 Reynaldo Minus
Atilla Levin KO 5 Fred Westgeest
Peter Okhello KO 5 Bob Mirovic
DaVarryl Williamson KO 1 Harold Sconiers
DaVarryl Williamson KO 3 Andre Kopilov
Dominic Guinn W 6 Antonio Colbert
Drexie Frank James KO 1 Michael Bennett

CRUISERWEIGHTS

Johnny Nelson W 12 Alexander Vasilliev
Ezra Sellers KO 4 Carl Thompson
Wayne Braithwaite KO 3 Louis Azille
Alexandre Gurov KO 4 Rudiger May
Dale Brown KO 9 Rick Roufas
Vincenzo Cantatore KO 3 Zoltan Beres
Luis Andres Pineda KO 2
Adolfo Caballero
Ian Koulkov KO 3 Sergey Krupenich
Jesper Kristiansen W 6 William O'Daniel
Robert Koon W 10 Cliff Nellon
Joey DeGrandis KO 1 John William
Tim Williamson KO 4 Andrew Greeley

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS

Silvio Branco W 6 Julien Chamayou
Thomas Hansvoll KO 3 Herve Decloedt
Jabrail Jabrailov KO 3
Eugeniy Galchenko
Randy Griffin W 6 Derrick Whitley

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Sven Ottke KO 10 Anthony Mundine
(Retains IBF Title)
Eric Lucas KO 8 Dingaan Thobela
(Retains WBC Title)

PHOTO BY BRIAN CANNON/DKP

William Joppy tries to sneak a right through Howard Eastman's guard

Richard Grant W 10 James Butler
Mads Larsen KO 5 Jose Spearman
Jurgen Brahmer KO 3 Ray Domenge
Willie Stewart W 10 Vitaliy Kopitko
Anthony Hanshaw KO 2 Mackie Willis
Jerson Ravelo W 6 Troy Barnes

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

William Joppy W 12 Howard Eastman
(Regains Vacant WBA Title)
Antonio Perugino W 6 Alexander Polizzi
Rhoshii Wells W 10 Kenny Ellis
Kirino Garcia W 10 Juan Carlos Barreto
Lansana Diallo W 12 Francisco Galvez
Tokunbo Olajide KO 4 R.J. Karsten
Cristian Sanavia W 12 Morrade Hakkar
Naotaka Hozumi KO 3 Jinyul Song
Kelly Pavlik KO 2 Rob Bleakley
Jermain Taylor KO 4 Undra White

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Mamadou Thiam KO 3 Gyorgy Bugyik
Julio Cesar Chavez KO 2 Terry Thomas
Richard Williams KO 4 Shannan Taylor
Wayne Alexander KO 2 Joe Townsley
Fitz Vanderpool D 8 Leon Pierson
Mikael Rask W 12 Aldredo Cuevas

WELTERWEIGHTS

Jose Luis Cruz KO 4
Luis Enrique Sanchez
Hercules Kyvelos KO 4
Michael Covington
Sergio Gabriel Martinez KO 7
Sergio Acuna
Hassan Al KO 1 Leonard Townsend
Germaine Sanders KO 3
Rosember Palacios
Andrey Trunov KO 8 Calvin Green
Christy Martin W 10 Lisa Holewyne

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS

Wayne Rigby W 12 Antonio Ramirez
Gianluca Branco Tech. Win 6
George Scott
Gabriel Mapouka W 6
Timote Gbenthino
Allan Vester W 6 Mourad Fantazi
Oscar Diaz KO 2 Felson Perez
Jeffrey Resto KO 3 Anthony Simpkins

LIGHTWEIGHTS

Julio Pablo Chacon KO 4 Andre Nicola
Alejandro Gonzalez W 10
Orlando Salido

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Richard Kiley moves inside against Brian Adams

Julian Wheeler W 12 Efren Hinojosa
Brian Adams KO 5 Richard Kiley
Sayan Sanchat KO 3 Tirso Albia
Dennis Laurente W 12 Yosuke Otsuka
Michele Delli Paoli W 12
Lazslo Komjathi
Calvin Davis W 10 Eduardo Castillo
Orlando Salido W 8 Regilio Tuur
Gary Balletto KO 1 Frey Luis Sierra
Paul Malignaggi W 4 Cornell Jackson

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS

Carlos Hernandez W 10 Justin Juuko
Daniel Attah W 8 Ever Beleno
Mzonke Fana KO 2 Patrick Malinga
Mike Anchondo W 6 Alejandro Jimenez

FEATHERWEIGHTS

Manuel Medina KO 6 Frankie Toledo
(Regains IBF Title)
Michael Brodie KO 2 Sean Fletcher
Kozo Ishii W 10 Saohin Sithchai Condo
Scott Harrison KO 3 Steve Robinson
Enrique Jupiter Tech. Draw 3
David Murillo
Zahir Raheem KO 2 Steve Trumble
Walter Estrada KO 3
Armando Cordoba

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

Yober Ortega KO 4 Jose Rojas
(Wins Vacant WBA Title)
Juan Carlos Ramirez KO 7
Hector Mancinis
Jorge Solis W 12 Ruben Estanislao
Masakazu Sugawara W 10
Cuauhtemoc Gomez

BANTAMWEIGHTS

Martin Castillo KO 2 Pedro Morquecho
Victor Rabanales W 12 Saul Briseno
Spend Abazi KO 5 Rodolfo Blanco
Kulabdang Kiatkreerin W 12
Edwin Gusdator
Clarence Vinson W 6 Jhovanny Collado

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS

Hayato Asai KO 10 Phiseh Worsurapon

FLYWEIGHTS

Denkaosan Kaovichit KO 1 Khadavi Fidal
Brian Viloria W 4 Mike Thomas

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS

Deeden Kengkaroon W 12
Falanzona Fidal
Pornsawan Porpamook KO 3
Juharum Silaban

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The RING

FIGHTER of the MONTH

Over the course of his 42-fight career, Lennox Lewis has had his share of noteworthy performances: the sixth-round knockout of well-regarded Gary Mason; the two-round blitz of a prime Razor Ruddock; the first-round destruction of Andrew Golota; the dominant boxing display in his first fight with Evander Holyfield; the crushing second-round kayo of Michael Grant. All were impressive, and all lend support to the notion that Lewis may be the finest heavyweight since Larry Holmes.

Yet what he did in his rematch with Hasim Rahman might just go down as Lewis' defining moment, his emphatic fourth-round knockout win possibly ranking as his greatest victory. Fighting to regain his heavyweight championship from the very man who shockingly starched him in his previous fight, Lewis, whose perpetual caution had put a mild damper on nearly everything he'd done previously, turned boxer-puncher and proved dominant. From his jab to his footwork, from his left hook to his trademark right hand, the 6'5" Englishman was simply awesome, and there was virtually nothing Rahman could do to stop Lewis from exacting his revenge. In fact, against *this* Lewis, there would be virtually nothing any heavyweight in the world could do.

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Lennox Lewis

RINGSIDE REPORTS

Manny Pacquiao Tech. Draw 6 Agapito Sanchez

San Francisco, California: The headliner on this city's first "world" championship card since 1981 was Floyd Mayweather-Jesus Chavez, but the Pacquiao-Sanchez fight preceded it, so that actually was the first Bay Area title bout in 20 years. Unfortunately, it was a forgettable one, at least as far as the quality of the result.

Designed to unify Pacquiao's IBF and Sanchez' WBO junior featherweight titles in front of a sellout crowd at Bill Graham Civic Auditorium, the bout instead deteriorated into a ridiculous foulfest and was stopped because an ugly cut over Pacquiao's right eye, caused by a second-round headbutt, became too severe after another headbutt in the sixth round.

In between those two infractions, Sanchez, 33-7-2 (20), delivered numerous low blows and had two points deducted, one for lacing in the third round and another for a low blow in the fourth. Nevertheless, when the action concluded just more than a minute into the sixth round, two judges had seen the action a whopping six points differently, with Marshall Walker (USA) scoring 57-55 for Sanchez—or 5-1 in rounds, before deductions—while Ricardo Bays (USA) scored 58-54 for Pacquiao. Raul Caiz Jr. (USA) had it 56-56.

Sanchez, who once lost the USBA 122-pound title on a disqualification for low blows (vs. Maui Diaz), and had point deductions for low blows in virtually all of his other major fights (vs. Guty Espadas, Freddie Norwood, Juan Manuel Marquez, and Marco Antonio Barrera), was unrepentant.

"He cries too much. He has no heart," the 31-year-old Dominican said of Pacquiao. "It's a championship fight. You've got to have heart to be a champion. He doesn't have one."

Pacquiao, 33-2-1 (24), wore an NYPD cap around town all week, but no one could protect him from the repeated low blows or from the head clashes spawned by the lefty-righty matchup.

"I'm not shocked, because I knew before the fight he was a dirty fighter," said Pacquiao, who was making his first defense since winning the title from Lehlo Ledwaba. "I don't know if it's his people or what. But that's not our boxing game. I love the boxing game. That's not boxing."

In the corner between the fourth and fifth rounds, Sanchez' trainer, Francisco Guzman, implored his fighter to "fight clean" and to throw "no more bodypunches." But Guzman was powerless to keep Sanchez, 120½, from spearing Pacquiao, 120 ¼, with his head in the sixth round, prompting referee Marty Denkin (USA) to stop the fight on the ringside physician's advice.

Freddie Roach, Pacquiao's trainer, protested that another point should have been deducted from Sanchez for the fight-ending butt.

"I told the referee, 'He butted him again, that should be another point.' He said, 'I already took two points away from him.' But just because he took away two points, does that give him the right to foul? The guy is the dirtiest fighter I've ever seen," Roach said.

It remains to be seen what this will do to Pacquiao's hopes of moving up to fight the winner of Erik Morales-Barrera II. But one person you shouldn't expect to see the 24-year-old Filipino titlist fight again is Sanchez.

"As long as I have Manny under contract, we will never fight Sanchez again," promoter Murad Muhammad said. "Sanchez is a disgrace to the boxing game and his license needs to be lifted."

Television: HBO

Promoters: M&M Sports, Top Rank

(11-10-01)

David Mayo

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Sanchez' dirty tactics had Pacquiao in a world of hurt

Yober Ortega KO 4 Jose Rojas

Las Vegas, Nevada: Some six hours before Lennox Lewis would win his third heavyweight title at age 36 in the final bout of the night, Ortega, also 36, opened the show at the Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino by winning his first major title. Of course, the belt he took home is relatively meaningless—it was the vacant WBA super bantam crown that the Venezuela-based orga-

nization appallingly ripped from Bones Adams for fighting Paulie Ayala in August—but for Ortega, it was still a conclusive victory and a notable achievement.

To the surprise of no one familiar with the WBA's dubious tendencies, its top two contenders, Ortega and Rojas, both hailed from Venezuela. And for the first three rounds, they both fought like boxers whose rankings hadn't been particularly well-earned. Rojas, 122, won the first two rounds on all three scorecards, getting off first while Ortega, 120½, was slow to get warmed up. Ortega began to move in close and work the body in the third, however, and toward the end of the round, the southpaw Ortega wobbled Rojas, 30, slightly with a left hand over the top. Ortega won the round on all three cards.

PHOTO BY BRIAN CANNON/DKP

Eastman fires a right hand en route to losing close decision to Joppy

After nine minutes of relatively slow action, the fight ended suddenly from one destructive punch early in the fourth. Ortega struck with a lead right hook that Rojas had no time to react to, and "Cheo" fell unconscious immediately, landing flat on his back. Referee Tony Weeks (USA) waved it off without a count at 36 seconds of the round.

Ortega, who had lost by decision in two previous title bids against Antonio Cermeno, raised his record to 32-3-1 (22), while Rojas dipped to 14-4-1 (10) with 1 no-contest.

Promoter: Don King Productions

(11-17-01)

Eric Raskin

William Joppy W 12 Howard Eastman

Las Vegas, Nevada: Boxing can be very confusing to anyone who tries to keep up with all of the various alphabet organizations and their respective so-called "champions." But Bernard Hopkins did his part to make all of that a little bit easier when he defeated Felix Trinidad to become the undisputed middleweight champ.

Or so we thought.

Just when we thought it was safe to look at the middleweight division again and see just one champion, the absurd WBA had to complicate things by making Hopkins the "Super Champion." This made the WBA 160-pound title vacant and gave Joppy, 31, a chance to become a three-time middleweight titleholder by defeating Eastman, 31, a relative unknown from London, England, with an undefeated record and a funky blond goatee, at Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino.

Coming off his most disappointing pro loss, a fifth-round kayo defeat to Trinidad back in May, Joppy entered the fight with a lot to prove. All week long, Joppy threatened to turn Eastman's blond beard blood red. Eastman, meanwhile, carried a casual demeanor the week leading up to the fight, and some might say Eastman lugged it into the first few rounds against Joppy, 33-2-1 (24).

With Hopkins looking down from his HBO Pay-Per-View analyst's perch, Joppy, Silver Spring, Maryland, controlled the early rounds, with "The Battersea Bomber" later coming alive in the middle rounds.

Joppy, 160, was the aggressor at the outset, backing up Eastman, 159, with the jab and overhand rights. Eastman, 32-1 (29), seemed to be an easy target to hit. But beginning in the fifth round, Eastman started to get on track, and frequently outpunched and outhustled Joppy. At times, like in the eighth, American fans got a glimpse of the eccentric Englishman's showman side, as he wobbled his head in exaggerated fashion, and later took a quick breather with his foot up on the bottom rope as he tried to goad Joppy inside.

Joppy appeared to have a slight lead entering the 12th round, but Eastman dominated the stanza, and made it a two-point round by slamming home an overhand right against a careless Joppy with just one second left on the clock. It looked as if that knockdown was enough to give Eastman the win, but in the end it was Joppy who was awarded a majority decision. Chuck Giampa (USA) scored it 113-113, while judges Bill Graham (USA) and Robert Watson (USA) scored it 115-112 and 114-112, respectively, for Joppy. THE RING had Eastman winning, 114-113. The referee was Jay Nady (USA).

"I should have started sooner," Eastman lamented after the fight. "My work rate could have been better early on, but overall, I'm pleased. I know in the minds of the people who

know boxing, and among the sportswriters, most people are coming up to me and telling me they had me winning the fight. That makes me feel good."

Television: HBO Pay-Per-View

Promoter: Don King Productions

(11-17-01)

Joe Santoliquito

Jose Antonio Aguirre KO 3 Wolf Tokimitsu

Okayama, Japan: WBC strawweight titlist Aguirre, 105, Mexico, easily kept his throne as he landed an explosive overhand right to drop the top-ranked Tokimitsu, 104½, Japan, and battered him until the referee intervened at 1:43 of the third round at Okayama Budokan.

Tokimitsu, a former Oriental-Pacific 105-pound beltholder, made good use of his vaunted footwork in the opening session, throwing left jabs at the cautious Mexican. But in the second round, Aguirre, making his fourth defense, caught up with the Japanese footworker and landed a solid left hook followed by a straight right.

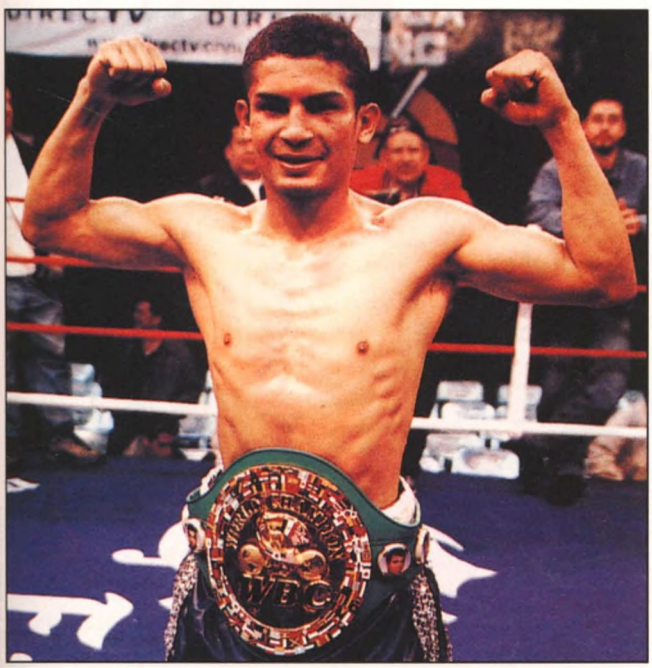
The third saw the Mexican upright stylist land a vicious overhand right to the face of Tokimitsu, 24, who went down and barely beat the count. Aguirre, 26, swarmed over the fading foe, and Tokimitsu, 19-4 (11), desperately fought back with his two-fisted attack. But the titlist displayed superior power and precision in punishing him so effectively that referee Laurence Cole (USA) had no choice but to declare a halt.

Aguirre, 27-1-1 (17), was fighting for the first time since undergoing surgery to combat persistent pain in his right shoulder. From this performance, the operation appears to have been a success.

Promoter: Kurashiki Moriyasu Promotions

(11-11-01)

Joe Koizumi



Aguirre's fourth WBC title defense was an easy one

Manuel Medina KO 6 Frankie Toledo

Las Vegas, Nevada: Revenge is a great motivator, but it also obscures logic sometimes. Since winning the IBF featherweight title in April 2001 by upsetting Mbulelo Botile, Toledo had been intent on making his first defense against three-time former feather titlist Medina, the only fighter he'd lost to in the last five years. Toledo insisted he was unprepared for their first fight, and was so confident that he'd win the rematch that he passed on purses four times as large and met Medina for a moderate fee of $50,000. Big mistake. Medina repeated his success of 18 months earlier, taking over the fight more and more each round until Toledo, claiming his vision was impaired from headbutts but also taking a one-sided beating from Medina's fists, quit on his stool five seconds into the sixth round.

Toledo, 126, Newark, New Jersey, got off to a good start in front of the standing-room-only crowd at the Orleans Casino, using his speed, southpaw style, footwork, and defensive aptitude to win the first two rounds. But just 10 seconds into the third round, Toledo leaned headfirst into Medina's gumshield-covered teeth, and came away with a bloody gash on his scalp. As a ruffled Toledo strayed from his game plan and began to brawl more, Medina, 126, Nayariet, Mexico, took control. Late in the round, Medina struck with a five-punch combination followed by a three-punch combo, and finished by wobbling the defending titlist with uppercuts just before the bell.

The fourth featured entertaining two-way action, with the 30-year-old Medina getting the better of it, and by the fifth, Toledo, 31, was backing up and producing very little offense, while complaining on a couple of occasions that the challenger was coming in with his head. The action was brisk, but it was almost all one-way, as "The Shark" let Medina pin him on the ropes and bang away with hooks and right hands. According to CompuBox, Medina landed 55 shots in the round, eight more than Toledo *threw*.

As the bell sounded to start the sixth, Toledo remained on his stool and said he was having trouble seeing and didn't want to fight on, forcing referee Kenny Bayless (USA) to call a halt. He seemed to be hoping the fight would go to the scorecards because he believed the damage was done by butts, but even if it had, the three American judges, Robert Byrd, Valerie Dorset, and Mike Pernick, all had Medina up 48-47.

"We knew going into this fight that we were gonna crack heads; that's his style of fighting," said a bitter, disappointed Toledo, 40-6-1 (15). "If he wants to call himself a champ, becoming a champ by headbutts, that's him. When I won it, I won it with my hands."

"He's the one who jumped into me when I cut him," insisted Medina after raising his record to 60-11 (27) and winning his fourth featherweight belt. "If you saw our last fight, he cut me all over my face. But I didn't quit. This time, he had a few cuts and he quit. He didn't want to fight. He's a good fighter, but he quit tonight."

Toledo requested another crack at Medina afterward, but what the new IBF beltholder will do next remains to be seen.

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Toledo insists head clashes like this caused the end of his reign

His preference is for a big-money bout with the Marco Antonio Barrera-Erik Morales winner or with the comeback-ing Naseem Hamed, who defeated him by 11th-round kayo in a competitive bout in 1996.

Television: ESPN2
Promoter: Guilty Boxing
(11-16-01)
Eric Raskin

Juan Carlos Gomez KO 6 Pietro Aurino

Lübeck, Germany: When fights can not be arranged with what few serious challengers there are available, you are left to go through your paces against second-raters. Gomez, 188, Hamburg, Germany, via Cuba, has been unable to get the only fight of any real intrigue at cruiserweight—a bout with IBF ruler Vassiliy Jirov—so he was left to dismantle Italian challenger Aurino, 188, in six rounds in front of a crowd of 4,000 at the Sportshalle. It was his division-record 10th defense of the WBC cruiserweight title.

In a duel of two southpaws, Gomez sent Aurino to the canvas four times before the one-sided affair was stopped at 1:42 of the sixth round. Aurino's significant reach disadvantage was apparent from the outset, and even though the challenger, four inches shorter than the 6'4" titlist, was able to land an occasional counter, he drew only contemptuous smiles from the 28-year-old Gomez.

A solid left to the head put the Italian down for the first time in round three, and in the next round his resistance seemed almost broken as "The Black Panther" stalked his man menacingly around the ring. Gomez, 34-0 (29), decided to attack the body and Aurino soon crumbled, combinations of bodyshots flooring him twice in round five. Another fusillade to the body in the sixth prompted the intervention of referee Mark Green at a timely point. The 24-year-old Aurino, 21-2 (11), was shipping punches and would only have been hurt further.

"I was quite satisfied with my performance," said Gomez. "I won clearly, but I was hoping for an even better performance. I was too much looking for the knockout. But the Italian was also quite good. He had a good defense, so it was hard to land punches to his head. That's why I started landing bodyshots to the liver. That softened him up, and finally it was game over."

It may also be game over for Gomez as a cruiserweight. This was his only title fight of 2001, and in his only other contest on the year, he defeated Al Cole as a heavyweight. His intention is to move into the heavyweight division full-time.

"People must understand that I can't make the cruiserweight limit anymore," he added. "I want to mix it up with the big guys at heavyweight. Against Aurino, I tired early because I had to lose 26 pounds in just a couple of weeks. That robbed me of my power. I'm not greedy for money. It's just I want to step up in weight. Also, I would like to take a real hard blow from a heavyweight. Sometimes I need to take a shot to wake up."

Promoter: Universum-Box
(11-3-01)
Brian Doogan

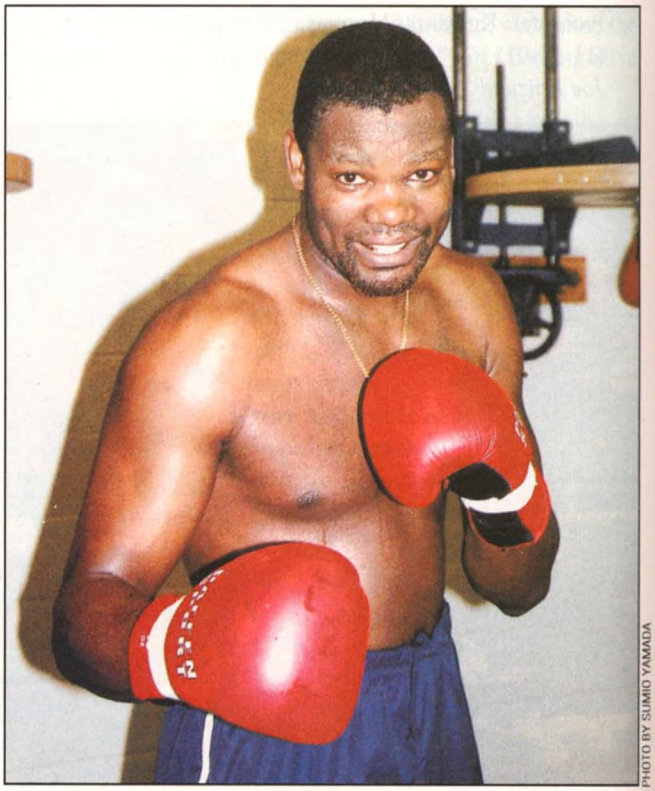


PHOTO BY SUMIO YAMADA

Gomez had to lose a lot of weight in the gym for the Aurino fight

Ezra Sellers KO 4 Carl Thompson

Manchester, England: Neither fighter will have his jaw preserved for posterity, but, with their fists, cruiserweights Sellers and Thompson produced a six-knockdown thriller at the Wythenshawe Forum. Sellers, 190, Washington, D.C., survived two visits to the canvas and a terrible opening round to inflict the lasting damage in round four with Thompson, 189, Manchester, England, rescued by American referee Steve Smoger after walking into a powerful right hand.

The British cruiserweight's biggest performances came more than three years ago, when he won two successive action-packed fights against Chris Eubank. Suspicions that the 37-year-old was on the slide, however, proved correct, as his punch resistance against Sellers was nothing near the required level. Thompson, 28-6 (21), had beaten Uriah Grant in February, but was never going to beat Sellers with his capacity to hold a punch utterly depleted.

He was floored late in the opening round, but immediately hit back with a right hook that knocked the 33-year-old Sellers down, and Thompson would undoubtedly have inflicted more damage had the bell not intervened. Rather than providing the normal minute's respite, it proved a salvation for southpaw Sellers. He was sufficiently recovered to go toe-to-toe with Thompson in the second and turned the tables significantly with an attack that put Thompson down once more before the Briton again closed the round stronger with a hard right that put the American down. With momentum swinging one way, then the other, it was impossible to predict what would happen next.

Thompson was the one who wilted, being knocked down again in the third by a right hand he ought to have been able to withstand, and in the fourth, he was caught conclusively. Sellers, 24-4 (22), had his back to the ropes and Thompson was moving in with a long right hand when the American got in first with a short right to the jaw that took the last ounce of fight out of Thompson. As he fell heavily to the floor with no chance of facing anything more than his doom, referee Smoger wisely waved it over at the 1:36 mark.

Exciting as it was, the two fighters' deficiencies rather than their dexterity created a drama that was nonetheless compelling.

Promoters: Ringside, Matchroom

(11-26-01)

Brian Doogan

Irene Pacheco KO 4 Mike Trejo

San Antonio, Texas: Making his first start since his controversial decision over Hawk Makepula in November 2000, IBF flyweight titleholder Pacheco had a fairly easy time overpowering Trejo for a TKO victory at 1:45 of the fourth round at Sunset Station.

Trejo, 111, San Marcos, Texas, came into the fight with a solid 27-1-2 (16) record, but clearly wasn't in Pacheco's league, and it didn't take the defending titlist long to figure out that the man in front of him didn't pose much of a threat. But Pacheco isn't the sort to abandon caution, even when he has an opponent badly outclassed.

Southpaw Pacheco, 111, Arbolete, Columbia, boxed carefully in the first round and looked to counter. And when the 31-year-old Trejo tried to mount an attack late in the round, Pacheco discouraged him with a couple of well-placed bodyshots.

The second round was closer, and Trejo connected with a good right to the body. But Pacheco got his jab going, and probably did enough to edge the round. It was in the third, however, that Pacheco really began to open up. He wobbled Trejo with a left cross, then pursued him into the ropes, trying for the finish. But the brave little Texan stood his ground and landed a couple of counter rights to delay the inevitable. Later in the session, Pacheco hurt Trejo again with a right, but he held on until the bell.

Pacheco, 30, took Trejo's legs with a straight left in the fourth, and punished him along the ropes. Halfway into the round, a pair of rights to the body, followed by a left to the chin put Trejo on the canvas. He regained his feet quickly, but after counting to eight, referee Robert Gonzalez (USA) stopped the fight, correctly figuring that Trejo had endured enough.

The win was Pacheco's fourth defense of the title he won in April '99, and raised his record to 26-0 (20). No word on whether or not Makepula will get the next shot.

Television: ESPN2

Promoter: Cedric Kushner

(11-9-01) ■

PHOTO BY SUMIO YAMADA

Pacheco jumps for joy after stoppage of Trejo

Alphabet Ratings

The Rankings of Boxing's Three International Governing Bodies

WBA RATINGS
(Ratings as of October 2001)

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: John Ruiz (USA)
1. Kirk Johnson (CAN)
2. Evander Holyfield (USA)
3. Vitaly Klitschko (UKR)
4. Mike Tyson (USA)
5. Lennox Lewis (GB)
6. Lance Whitaker (USA)
7. Henry Akinwande (GB)
8. Nicolay Valouev (RUS)
9. Larry Donald (USA)
10. David Izon (NIG)
11. Chris Byrd (USA)
12. Vaughn Bean (USA)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Champ: Virgil Hill (USA)
1. Jean Marc Mormeck (FRA)
2. Alexander Gurov (UKR)
3. James Toney (USA)
4. Louis Azille (DR)
5. Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)
6. O'Neil Bell (USA)
7. Carl Thompson (GB)
8. Vincenzo Cantatore (ITA)
9. Andre Purlett (GUY)
10. Imamu Mayfield (USA)
11. Jorge Castro (ARG)
12. Wayne Braithwaite (GUY)

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS
Super Champ: Roy Jones (USA)
1. Lou Del Valle (USA)
2. Bruno Girard (FRA)
3. Glenn Kelly (AUSTRL)
4. Clinton Woods (GB)
5. Reggie Johnson (USA)
6. Robert Koon (USA)
7. Antonio Tarver (USA)
8. Mads Larsen (DEN)
9. David Telesco (USA)
10. Julio Gonzalez (USA)
11. Glencoffe Johnson (USA)
12. Montell Griffin (USA)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Byron Mitchell (USA)
1. Vacant
2. Andrei Shkalikov (RUS)
3. Thomas Tate (USA)
4. David Starie (GB)
5. Dana Rosenblatt (USA)
6. Manuel Siacca (PR)
7. Rudy Markussen (DEN)
8. Omar Sheika (USA)
9. Mikkel Kessler (DEN)
10. Danilo Haussler (GER)
11. Markus Beyer (GER)
12. Charles Brewer (USA)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Super Champ: Bernard Hopkins (USA)
1. Howard Eastman (GB)
2. Felix Trinidad (PR)
3. David Reid (USA)
4. William Joppy (USA)
5. Darren Obah (AUSTRL)
6. Julio Cesar Green (DR)
7. Keith Holmes (USA)
8. Hassine Cherifi (FRA)
9. Antonio Perugino (ITA)
10. Ryan Rhodes (GB)
11. Tito Mendoza (PAN)
12. Erland Betare (FRA)

SUPER WELTERWEIGHTS
Champ: Fernando Vargas (USA)
1. Vacant
2. Mamadou Thiam (FRA)
3. Ike Quartey (GHA)
4. Roman Karmazin (RUS)
5. Jose Flores (MEX)
6. Frank Olsen (DEN)
7. J.C. Candelo (COL)
8. Santiago Samaniego (PAN)
9. Kevin Kelly (USA)
10. Travis Simms (USA)
11. Michael Rask (DEN)
12. Akira Ohigashi (JAP)

WELTERWEIGHTS
Champ: Andrew Lewis (GUY)
1. Ricardo Mayorga (CR)
2. Thomas Damgaard (DEN)
3. Michael Trabant (GERE)
4. Chantel Stanciel (USA)
5. Michele Piccirillo (ITA)
6. James Page (USA)
7. Jose Rivera (USA)
8. Carlos Baldomir (ARG)
9. Hiroyuki Maeda (JAP)
10. Danny Perez (USA)
11. Arturo Gatti (USA)
12. Frederic Klose (FRA)

SUPER LIGHTWEIGHTS
Super Champ: Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)
1. Hector Camacho Jr (PR)
2. Diobelis Hurtado (CUB)
3. Randall Bailey (USA)
4. Sharmba Mitchell (USA)
5. Khalid Rahilou (FRA)
6. Ricky Hatton (GB)
7. Oktay Urkal (TUR)
8. Demetrio Ceballos (PAN)
9. Terronn Millett (USA)
10. Gianluca Branco (ITA)
11. Antonio Diaz (USA)
12. Soulemane M'Baye (FRA)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Champ: Raul Balbi (ARG)
1. Vacant
2. Stefano Zoff (ITA)
3. Julien Lorcy (FRA)
4. Takanori Hatakeyama (JAP)
5. Miguel Callist (PAN)
6. Sandro Casamonica (ITA)
7. Angel Manfredy (USA)
8. Edson Xuxa Nascimento (BRA)
9. Juan Gomez-Trinidad (PR)
10. Rick Yoshimura (JAP)
11. Alex Trujillo (PR)
12. Juan Lazcano (USA)

SUPER FEATHERWEIGHTS
Champ: Joel Casamayor (CUB)
1. Lakva Sim (MON)
2. Yodsanan Nanthachai (THAI)
3. Lamont Pearson (USA)
4. Luis Navarro (USA)
5. Jorge Barrios (ARG)
6. Jongkwon Baek (KOR)
7. Jesus Chavez (USA)
8. Jose Miguel Cotto (PR)
9. Kinji Amano (JAP)
10. Tontcho Tontchev (BUL)
11. Michael Gomez (GB)
12. Roberto Garcia (USA)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Champ: Derrick Gainer (USA)
1. Daniel Seda (PR)
2. Naseem Hamed (GB)
3. Juan Manuel Marquez (MEX)
4. Victor Polo (COL)
5. Philip Ndou (SA)
6. Lewis Woods (US)
7. Johnny Tapia (USA)
8. Armando Cordoba (PAN)
9. Istvan Kovacs (HUN)
10. Antonio Cermeno (VEN)
11. Injin Chi (KOR)
12. Takashi Koshimoto (JAP)

SUPER BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Vacant
1. Yober Ortega (VEN)
2. Jose Rojas (VEN)
3. Sithyodthong Yoddamrong (THAI)
4. Salim Medjkoune (FRA)
5. Veerapol Sor Voraphin (THAI)
6. Kozo Ishii (JAP)
7. Osamu Sato (JAP)
8. Enrique Sanchez (MEX)
9. Israel Vasquez (MEX)
10. Johnny Armour (GB)
11. Walter Estrada (COL)
12. Vincenzo Gigliotti (ITA)

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Eidy Moya (VEN)
1. Vacant
2. Leo Gamez (VEN)
3. Johnny Bredahl (DEN)
4. Toshiaki Nishioka (JAP)
5. Rafael Marquez (MEX)
6. Sahoiu Sithchai Condo (THAI)
7. Adan Vargas (MEX)
8. Mark Johnson (USA)
9. Diego Morales (MEX)
10. Genaro Garcia (USA)
11. Spend Abazi (DEN)
12. Noriaki Naka (JAP)

SUPER FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Setsuo Kobayashi (JAP)
1. Alexander Munoz (VEN)
2. Saen Sow Ploenchit (THAI)
3. Mbwana Matumla (TNZ)
4. Sornpichai Pisnurachank (THAI)
5. Hideki Todaka (JAP)
6. Kazuhiro Ryuko (JAP)
7. Adonis Rivas (NIC)
8. Jesus Rojas (VEN)
9. Katsushigo Kawashima (JAP)
10. Gerry Penalosa (PHIL)
11. Luis Bolanos (COL)
12. Dimitri Kirilov (RUS)

FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Eric Morel (USA)
1. Denkaosaen Kaowitch (THAI)
2. Mzukisi Sikali (SA)
3. Isidro Garcia (MEX)
4. Mike Trejo (USA)
5. Alejandro Montiel (MEX)
6. Alexander Mahmutov (RUS)
7. Jose Lopez (VEN)
8. Masaki Nakamuna (JAP)
9. Gilberto Gonzalez (VEN)
10. Damaen Kelly (GB)
11. Jose Carita Lopez (PR)
12. Lorenzo Parra (VEN)

LIGHT FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Rosendo Alvarez (NIC)
1. Pichitnoi C. Siriwat (THAI)
2. Hidenobu Honda (JAP)
3. Yura Dima (MON)
4. Bebis Mendoza (COL)
5. Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)
6. Deeden Kengkarun (THAI)
7. Eric Ortiz (MEX)
8. Wolf Tokimitsu (JAP)
9. Masibulele Makepula (SA)
10. Yeosam Choi (KOR)
11. Saman Sorjaturong (THAI)
12. Edgar Velasquez (VEN)

MINIMUMWEIGHTS
Champ: Vacant
1. Noel Arambulet (VEN)
2. Keitaro Hoshino (JAP)
3. Joma Gamboa (PHIL)
4. Chana Porpaoin (THAI)
5. Jose Garcia (COL)
6. Kim Ki Hwan (KOR)
7. Hiroshi Matsumoto (JAP)
8. Hiroshi Nakajima (JAP)
9. Daniel Reyes (COL)
10. Keisuke Yokoyama (JAP)
11. Khulile Makeba (SA)
12. Jairo Arango (PAN)

WBC RATINGS
(Ratings as of November 2001)

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: Hasim Rahman (USA)
1. Mike Tyson (USA)
2. Lennox Lewis (GB)
3. Vitaly Klitschko (UKR)
4. Fres Oquendo (USA)
5. Kirk Johnson (CAN)
6. Lance Whitaker (USA)
7. Larry Donald (USA)
8. Chris Byrd (USA)
9. Vaughn Bean (USA)
10. Michael Moorer (USA)
11. Henry Akinwande (GB)
12. Clifford Etienne (USA)
13. David Tua (NZ)
14. Danny Williams (GB)
15. Ray Mercer (USA)
16. Monte Barrett (USA)
17. Oliver McCall (USA)
18. Francois Botha (SA)
19. Obed Sullivan (USA)
20. Brian Nielsen (DEN)
21. Faruq Saleem (USA)
22. Danell Nicholson (USA)
23. Luan Krasniqi (GER)
24. Timo Hoffman (GER)
25. George Kandelaki (GEO)
26. Nicolay Valouev (RUS)
27. Lawrence Clay-Bey (USA)
28. Friday Ahunanya (USA)
29. Peter Okhello (UGA)
30. Joe Mesi (USA)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Champ: Juan Carlos Gomez (CUBA)
1. Louis Azille (DR)
2. Vincenzo Cantatore (ITA)
3. Wayne Braithwaite (GUY)
4. O'Neil Bell (USA)
5. Alexander Gurov (UKR)
6. Carlos Cruzat (CHI)
7. Carl Thompson (GB)
8. Rudiger May (GER)
9. Dale Brown (CAN)
10. Sebastiaan Rothmann (SA)
11. Arthur Williams (USA)
12. Bruce Scott (GB)
13. Turan Bagci (TUR)
14. Ramon Garbey (USA)
15. Pietro Aurino (ITA)
16. Ezra Sellars (USA)
17. Roman Kovalchuk (UKR)
18. Jason Robinson (USA)
19. Adolpho Washington (USA)
20. Alain Simon (FRA)
21. Mohamed Ben Guesmia (ALG)
22. Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)
23. Robert Norton (GB)
24. Luis Andres Pineda (PAN)
25. Hector Avila (ARG)
26. James Walton (USA)
27. Daniel Rowsell (AUSTRL)
28. Sione Asipeli (TON)
29. Michael Rodgers (USA)
30. Rich Boruff (USA)

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: Roy Jones (USA)
1. Clinton Woods (GB)
2. Reggie Johnson (USA)
3. Yawe Davis (ITA)
4. Antonio Tarver (USA)
5. Mads Larsen (DEN)
6. Eric Harding (USA)
7. Glenn Kelly (AUSTRL)
8. Julio Gonzalez (USA)
9. Montell Griffin (USA)
10. Michael Nunn (USA)
11. Glencoffe Johnson (USA)
12. Kamel Amrane (FRA)
13. Lincoln Carter (USA)
14. Chris Johnson (CAN)
15. Derrick Harmon (USA)
16. Thomas Ulrich (GER)
17. Thomas Hansvoll (NOR)
18. Robert Koon (USA)
19. Silvio Branco (ITA)
20. Jabrial Jabrialov (RUS)
21. Sergio Baez (ARG)
22. Mario Tonus (ITA)
23. Juan Nelongo (SPA)
24. Tomasz Adamek (POL)
25. Stipe Drews (CRO)
26. Sean Fitzgerald (USA)
27. Roberto Dominguez (SPA)
28. Arturo Rivera (MEX)
29. George Jones (USA)
30. Jim Murray (USA)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Eric Lucas (CAN)
1. Dingaan Thobela (SA)
2. Markus Beyer (GER)
3. David Reid (USA)
4. David Starie (GB)
5. Glenn Catley (GB)
6. Thomas Tate (USA)
7. Danilo Haussler (GER)
8. Omar Sheika (USA)
9. Jerry Elliott (NIG)
10. Mikkel Kessler (DEN)
11. Antwun Echols (USA)
12. Rudy Markussen (DEN)
13. Zafarou Ballogou (TOGO)
14. Charles Brewer (USA)
15. Ramon Britez (ARG)
16. Andrei Shkalikov (RUS)
17. Jurgen Brahmer (GER)
18. Henry Porras (CR)
19. Syd Vanderpool (CAN)
20. Yoshinori Nishizawa (JAP)
21. James Lubwana (UGA)
22. Robin Reid (GB)
23. Mario Veit (GER)
24. Dan Batchelder (USA)
25. Sidney Msutu (SA)
26. Kippy Warren (USA)
27. Victor Oganov (RUS)
28. Fernando Zuniga (ECU)
29. Mehdi Sanoune (FRA)
30. Jose M. Guerrero (SPA)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Bernard Hopkins (USA)
1. Erland Betare (FRA)
2. Felix Trinidad (PR)
3. Howard Eastman (GB)
4. Tito Mendoza (PAN)
5. Cristian Sanavia (ITA)
6. William Joppy (USA)
7. Keith Holmes (USA)
8. Carl Daniels (USA)
9. Morrade Hakkar (FRA)
10. Naotaka Hozumi (JAP)
11. Jose Luis Lopez (MEX)
12. Aaron Davis (USA)
13. Kevin Palmer (USA)
14. Antonio Perugino (ITA)
15. Raymond Joval (HOL)
16. Robert Allen (USA)
17. Aaron Mitchell (USA)
18. Kuvanych Toygonbayev (UZB)
19. Oure Evans (KEN)
20. Raul Marquez (USA)
21. Marlon Hayes (USA)
22. Dwain Williams (USA)
23. Lansana Djallo (BEL)
24. Jose Clavero (ARG)
25. Alejandro Berrio (COL)
26. Andres Galfi (HUN)
27. Jorge Sendra (SPA)
28. Lawrence Chapman (USA)
29. Stephan Trabant (GER)
30. Ryan Rhodes (GB)

SUPER WELTERWEIGHTS
Champ: Oscar De La Hoya (USA)
1. Roman Karmazin (RUS)
2. Francisco Castillejo (SPA)
3. Fitz Vanderpool (CAN)
4. Travis Simms (USA)
5. J.C. Candelo (COL)
6. Quirino Garcia (MEX)
7. Bronco McKart (USA)
8. Yory Boy Campas (MEX)
9. Alex Bunema (USA)
10. Mamadou Thiam (FRA)
11. Nader Hamdan (AUSTRL)
12. Akira Ohigashi (JAP)
13. Paolo Pizzamiglio (ITA)
14. Richard Williams (GB)
15. Steve Roberts (GB)
16. Kassim Ouma (USA)
17. Christophe Canclaux (FRA)
18. Frank Olsen (DEN)
19. Santiago Samaniego (PAN)
20. Sergei Dzindziruk (UKR)
21. Adrian Stone (GB)
22. Wayne Alexander (GB)
23. Wilfredo Rivera (PR)
24. Jason Papillion (USA)
25. Michael Rask (DEN)
26. Elvis Guerrero (PAN)
27. Lorenzo DiGiacomo (ITA)
28. Anthony Farnell (GB)
29. Fathi Missaoui (CAN)
30. Mihaly Kotai (HUN)

WELTERWEIGHTS
Champ: Shane Mosley (USA)
1. Jose Luis Cruz (MEX)
2. Carlos Baldomir (ARG)
3. Thomas Damgaard (DEN)
4. Michele Piccirillo (ITA)
5. Danny Perez (USA)
6. Hercules Kyvelos (CAN)
7. Alessandro Duran (ITA)
8. Julian Holland (AUSTRL)
9. Manuel Gomez (MEX)
10. Cory Spinks (USA)
11. Alexander Vetoux (UKR)
12. Reb Santillan (PHIL)
13. Maxim Nesterenko (RUS)
14. Shannan Taylor (AUSTRL)
15. Michele Orlando (ITA)
16. Chantel Stanciel (USA)
17. Antonio Diaz (MEX)
18. Michel Trabant (GER)
19. Oba Carr (USA)
20. Sergio Martinez (ARG)
21. Hassan Al (DEN)
22. Rafael Pineda (COL)
23. Frederic Klose (FRA)
24. Golden Johnson (USA)
25. Jose Rivera (USA)
26. Miguel Rodriguez (MEX)
27. Jawaid Khaliq (GB)
28. Edwin Cassiani (COL)
29. Jyri Kjall (FIN)
30. Neil Sinclair (GB)

SUPER LIGHTWEIGHTS
Champ: Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)
1. Gianluca Branco (ITA)
2. Hector Camacho Jr (PR)
3. Oktay Urkal (TUR)
4. Eamonn Magee (GB)
5. Mikhail Krivolapov (RUS)
6. Gabriel Mapuoka (FRA)
7. Ben Tackie (GHA)
8. Terronn Millett (USA)
9. Ray Oliveira (USA)
10. James Leija (USA)
11. Sharmba Mitchell (USA)
12. Masakazu Satake (JAP)
13. Wilfredo Vilches (ARG)
14. Ricky Hatton (GB)
15. Arturo Gatti (CAN)
16. Ricky Quiles (USA)
17. Soulemane M'Baye (FRA)
18. Vivian Harris (USA)
19. Junior Witter (GB)
20. Khalid Rahilou (FRA)
21. Antonio Pitalua (COL)
22. Teddy Reid (JAM)
23. Giuseppe Lauri (ITA)

24. Terrance Cauthen (USA)
25. Vince Phillips (USA)
26. Micky Ward (USA)
27. Juan Mosquera (PAN)
28. Hiroyuki Maeda (JAP)
29. Pablo Sarmiento (ARG)
30. Michael Stewart (USA)

LIGHTWEIGHTS

Champ: Jose Luis Castillo (MEX)
1. Steve Johnston (USA)
2. Juan Lazcano (USA)
3. Alex Trujillo (PR)
4. Lovemore Ndou (SA)
5. Stefano Zoff (ITA)
6. Julio Diaz (USA)
7. Lawrence Ngobeni (SA)
8. Carlos Gerena (PR)
9. Julien Lorcy (FRA)
10. Dennis Holbaek (DEN)
11. Victoriano Damian Sosa (DR)
12. Michael Clark (USA)
13. Colin Dunne (GB)
14. Diego Gimenez (ARG)
15. Takanori Hatakeyama (JAP)
16. Sandro Casamonica (ITA)
17. Cesar Bazan (MEX)
18. Francisco Bojado (MEX)
19. Alberto Sicurella (ARG)
20. Jongkwon Baek (KOR)
21. Efren Hinojosa (MEX)
22. Juan Gomez-Trinidad (PR)
23. Leonard Dorin (CAN)
24. Luis Lizarraga (MEX)
25. Jimmy Rangel (COL)
26. Omar Bernal (MEX)
27. Leavander Johnson (USA)
28. Michael Ayers (GB)
29. James Armah (GHA)
30. Tirso Albia (PHIL)

SUPER FEATHERWEIGHTS

Champ: Floyd Mayweather (USA)
1. Jesus Chavez (USA)
2. Sirimongkol Singmanassuk (THAI)
3. Kengo Nagashima (JAP)
4. Tiger Ari (PHIL)
5. Lakva Sim (MON)
6. Randy Suico (PHIL)
7. Alejandro Gonzalez (MEX)
8. Philip Ndou (SA)
9. Affif Djelti (FRA)
10. Carlos Hernandez (EL SALV)
11. Boris Sinitsin (RUS)
12. William Abelyan (USA)
13. Tontcho Tontchev (BUL)
14. Ernesto Zepeda (MEX)
15. Michael Gomez (GB)
16. Lamont Pearson (USA)
17. Fred Norwood (USA)
18. Pedro Miranda (SPA)
19. Silvio Usini (ITA)
20. Claudio Martinet (ARG)
21. Yodsanan Nanthachai (THAI)
22. Laszlo Bognar (HUN)
23. Fernando Trejo (MEX)
24. Mzonke Fana (SA)
25. Javier Jauregui (MEX)
26. David Santos (USA)
27. Kinji Amano (JAP)
28. Koji Arisawa (JAP)
29. Javier Alvarez (ARG)
30. Patrick Malinga (SA)

FEATHERWEIGHTS

Champ: Erik Morales (MEX)
1. Naseem Hamed (GB)
2. Injin Chi (KOR)
3. Juan Manuel Marquez (MEX)
4. Johnny Tapia (USA)
5. Manuel Calvo (SPA)
6. Robbie Peden (AUSTRL)
7. Guty Espadas (MEX)
8. Istvan Kovacs (HUN)
9. Scott Harrison (GB)
10. Luis Fuentes (MEX)
11. Takashi Koshimoto (JAP)
12. Augie Sanchez (USA)
13. Junior Jones (USA)
14. Anthony Tshehla (SA)
15. Panther Yanagida (JAP)
16. Fernando Velardez (MEX)
17. Pastor Maurin (ARG)
18. Hector Acero-Sanchez (DR)
19. Francisco Dianzo (MEX)
20. Daniel Seda (PR)
21. Samuel Duran (PHIL)
22. Toshikage Kimura (JAP)
23. John Michael Johnson (USA)
24. Wilson Alcorro (COL)
25. Armando Cordoba (PAN)
26. Orlando Soto (PAN)
27. Cesar Figueroa (MEX)
28. Jose Luis Valbuena (VEN)
29. Joan Guzman (DR)
30. Mkuseli Kondile (SA)

SUPER BANTAMWEIGHTS

Champ: Willie Jorrin (USA)
1. Michael Brodie (GB)
2. Israel Vazquez (MEX)
3. Oscar Larios (MEX)
4. Wayne McCullough (IRE)
5. Osamu Sato (JAP)
6. Salim Medjkoune (FRA)
7. Kiattisak Chocchoi (THAI)
8. Nadel Hussein (AUSTRL)
9. Manabu Fukushima (JAP)
10. Marcos Licona (USA)
11. Lehlo Ledwaba (SA)
12. Kozo Ishii (JAP)
13. Junichi Watanabe (JAP)
14. Fabian Oliva (ARG)
15. Yoshihisa Tomimoto (JAP)
16. Patrick Mullings (GB)
17. Emmanuel Lucero (USA)
18. Vincenzo Gigliotti (ITA)
19. Angel Chacon (PR)
20. Yongjin Cho (KOR)
21. Celestino Caballero (PAN)
22. Hector Julia Avila (DR)
23. Jackwang Chung (KOR)
24. Sandor Koczak (HUN)
25. Vladislav Antonov (RUS)
26. Cassius Baloyi (SA)
27. Tetsutora Senrima (JAP)
28. Frankie DeMilo (GB)
29. Andres Fernandez (USA)
30. Jorge Solis (MEX)

BANTAMWEIGHTS

Champ: Veerapol Sahaprom (THAI)
1. Toshiaki Nishioka (JAP)
2. Genaro Garcia (USA)
3. Johnny Bredahl (DEN)
4. Rafael Marquez (MEX)
5. Diego Morales (MEX)
6. Jess Maca (PHIL)
7. Noel Wilders (GB)
8. Akihiro Kanai (JAP)
9. Mark Johnson (USA)
10. Cruz Carbajal (MEX)
11. Julio Zarate (MEX)
12. Abner Cordero (PHIL)
13. Jhonny Gonzalez (MEX)
14. Nobuaki Naka (JAP)
15. Spend Abazi (DEN)
16. Fabien Guillerme (FRA)
17. Heriberto Ruiz (MEX)
18. Francisco Mateos (MEX)
19. Ricardo Barajas (MEX)
20. Jorge Lacierva (MEX)
21. Alexandre Yagupov (FRA)
22. Lester Fuentes (EL SALV)
23. Nicky Booth (GB)
24. Kyongchul Park (KOR)
25. Debind Thapa (NEP)
26. Fasan 3K-Battery (THAI)
27. Julio Cesar Medina (ARG)
28. Alfren Bulala (PHIL)
29. Nathan Sting (AUSTRL)
30. Roger Gonzalez (USA)

SUPER FLYWEIGHTS

Champ: Masanori Tokuyama (JAP)
1. Dimitri Kirilov (RUS)
2. Gerry Penalosa (PHIL)
3. Martin Castillo (MEX)
4. Reynaldo Hurtado (COL)
5. Kazuhiro Ryuko (JAP)
6. Malcolm Tunacao (PHIL)
7. Chatchai Sasakul (THAI)
8. Luis Bolanos (COL)
9. Saen Sow Ploenchit (THAI)
10. Shingo Sasaki (JAP)
11. Erick Lopez (MEX)
12. Katsushigo Kawashima (JAP)
13. Medgoen Singsurat (THAI)
14. Vernie Torres (USA)
15. Takuya Kiya (JAP)
16. Jose Angel Becerra (MEX)
17. Trinidad Mendoza (MEX)
18. Mauricio Pastrana (COL)
19. Alexander Knight (RUS)
20. Sot Sot Veeraphol (THAI)
21. Julio Coronel (COL)
22. Luis Perez (NIC)
23. Eric Barcelona (PHIL)
24. Ratanachai Vorapin (THAI)
25. Kun Sik Lee (KOR)
26. Hiroaki Murakoshi (JAP)
27. Gonseng Duksoo (KOR)
28. Ricardo Cordoba (PAN)
29. Tomas Rojas (MEX)
30. Joel Avila (PHIL)

FLYWEIGHTS

Champ: Pongsaklek Wonjongkam (THAI)
1. Mike Trejo (USA)
2. Alexander Mahmutov (RUS)
3. Hidenobu Honda (JAP)
4. Hiroshi Nakano (JAP)
5. Wandee Chor Chareon (THAI)
6. Alex Ali Baba (GHA)
7. Randy Mangubat (PHIL)
8. Hussein Hussein (AUSTRL)
9. Masaki Nakamuna (JAP)
10. Damaen Kelly (GB)
11. Hawk Makepula (SA)
12. Everardo Morales (MEX)
13. Alejandro Montiel (MEX)
14. Hayato Asai (JAP)
15. Takefumi Sakata (JAP)
16. David Guerault (FRA)
17. Daisuke Naito (JAP)
18. Gilberto Keb-Baas (MEX)
19. Omar Narvaez (ARG)
20. Mzukisi Sikali (SA)
21. Panieng Sasiprabha (THAI)
22. Lorenzo Parra (VEN)
23. Peter Culshaw (GB)
24. Dongkil Shin (KOR)
25. Melvin Magramo (PHIL)
26. Jason Booth (GB)
27. Mimoun Chent (FRA)
28. Jair Jimenez (COL)
29. Wellington Vicente (BRA)
30. Liborio Romero (MEX)

LIGHT FLYWEIGHTS

Champ: Yosam Choi (KOR)
1. Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)
2. Juanito Rubillar (PHIL)
3. Jesus Martinez (MEX)
4. Agustin Luna (MEX)
5. Saman Sorjaturong (THAI)
6. Eric Ortiz (MEX)
7. Pilkoo Kang (KOR)
8. Vuyisile Bebe (SA)
9. Surachai Saengmorokot (THAI)
10. Keisuke Yokoyama (JAP)
11. Jake Matlala (SA)
12. Jovan Presbitero (PHIL)
13. John Molina (COL)
14. Ernesto Castro (NIC)
15. Takayuki Korogi (JAP)
16. Chart Kiatpetch (THAI)
17. Victor Burgos (MEX)
18. Noboyuki Enomoto (JAP)
19. Songkram Porpaoin (THAI)
20. Rolly Lunas (PHIL)
21. Antonio Torres (MEX)
22. Marcos Obregon (ARG)
23. Luis Lazarte (ARG)
24. Minsoo Jang (KOR)
25. Jinho Kim (KOR)
26. Flash Villacura (PHIL)
27. Omar Nino (MEX)
28. Celso Danggud (PHIL)
29. Juan Keb Baas (MEX)
30. Oscar Murillo (NIC)

STRAWWEIGHTS

Champ: Jose Antonio Aguirre (MEX)
1. Yasuo Tokimitsu (JAP)
2. Khulile Makeba (SA)
3. Ernesto Rubillar (PHIL)
4. Isaac Bustos (MEX)
5. Hiroshi Nakajima (JAP)
6. Noel Tunacao (PHIL)
7. Joma Gamboa (PHIL)
8. Hiroshi Matsumoto (JAP)
9. Noel Arambulet (VEN)
10. Heriberto Gijon (PHIL)
11. Chana Porpaoin (THAI)
12. Makoto Suzuki (JAP)
13. Satoshi Kogumasaka (JAP)
14. Manny Melchor (PHIL)
15. Sizwe Sinyabi (SA)
16. Jaewon Kim (KOR)
17. Rodel Mayol (PHIL)
18. Jairo Arango (PAN)
19. Fernando Luna (MEX)
20. Juan Palacios (NIC)
21. Valentin Leon (MEX)
22. Daisuke Iida (JAP)
23. Wele Maqolo (SA)
24. Hiroyuki Abe (JAP)
25. Juan Centeno (NIC)
26. Lorenzo Trejo (MEX)
27. Mohamed Rachman (INDO)
28. Leonardo Rodriguez (MEX)
29. Mlungiselei Xokoloshe (SA)
30. Miguel Barrera (MEX)

IBF RATINGS

(Ratings as of October 2001)

HEAVYWEIGHTS

Champ: Hasim Rahman (USA)
1. Chris Byrd (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Lennox Lewis (GB)
4. Mike Tyson (USA)
5. Fres Oquendo (USA)
6. Kirk Johnson (CAN)
7. Lance Whitaker (USA)
8. Henry Akinwande (GB)
9. Monte Barrett (USA)
10. David Tua (NZ)
11. Ray Mercer (USA)
12. Clifford Etienne (USA)

CRUISERWEIGHTS

Champ: Vassiliy Jirov (KAZ)
1. Jorge Castro (ARG)
2. Vacant
3. O'Neil Bell (USA)
4. James Toney (USA)
5. Alexander Gurov (UKR)
6. Louis Azille (DR)
7. Arthur Williams (USA)
8. Imamu Mayfield (USA)
9. Carl Thompson (GB)
10. Wayne Braithwaite (GUY)
11. Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)
12. Ramon Garbey (USA)

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS

Champ: Roy Jones (USA)
1. Glenn Kelly (AUSTRL)
2. Reggie Johnson (USA)
3. Eric Harding (USA)
4. Antonio Tarver (USA)
5. Glencoffe Johnson (USA)
6. Clinton Woods (GB)
7. David Telesco (USA)
8. Will Taylor (USA)
9. Bruno Girard (FRA)
10. Lou Del Valle (USA)
11. Lincoln Carter (USA)
12. Thomas Ulrich (GER)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Champ: Sven Ottke (GER)
1. Thomas Tate (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Omar Sheika (USA)
4. Charles Brewer (USA)
5. Markus Beyer (GER)
6. David Starie (GB)
7. David Reid (USA)
8. James Butler (USA)
9. Antwun Echols (USA)
10. Danilo Haussler (GER)
11. Mads Larsen (DEN)
12. Dana Rosenblatt (USA)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Champ: Bernard Hopkins (USA)
1. Carl Daniels (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Tito Mendoza (PAN)
4. Howard Eastman (GB)
5. Erland Betare (FRA)
6. Keith Holmes (USA)
7. William Joppy (USA)
8. Raymond Joval (HOL)
9. Cristian Sanavia (ITA)
10. Harry Simon (NAM)
11. Brian Barbosa (USA)
12. Ali Ennebati (FRA)

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Champ: Winky Wright (USA)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Bronco McKart (USA)
4. Nader Hamdan (AUSTRL)
5. Alex Bunema (USA)
6. J.C. Candelo (COL)
7. Francisco Castillejo (SPA)
8. Jason Papillion (USA)
9. Quirino Garcia (MEX)
10. Robert Frazier (USA)
11. Travis Simms (USA)
12. Emmett Linton (USA)

WELTERWEIGHTS

Champ: Vernon Forrest (USA)
1. Michele Piccirillo (ITA)
2. Cory Spinks (USA)
3. Rafael Pineda (COL)
4. Antonio Diaz (MEX)
5. Thomas Damgaard (DEN)
6. Danny Perez (USA)
7. Hercules Kyvelos (CAN)
8. Julian Holland (AUSTRL)
9. Hector Quiroz (MEX)
10. Oba Carr (USA)
11. Jose Rivera (USA)
12. Antonio Margarito (USA)

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS

Champ: Zab Judah (USA)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Ben Tackie (GHA)
4. Teddy Reid (JAM)
5. Carlos Vilches (ARG)
6. Terronn Millett (USA)
7. Oktay Urkal (TUR)
8. Ray Oliveira (USA)
9. James Leija (USA)
10. Sharmba Mitchell (USA)
11. Micky Ward (USA)
12. Allan Vester (DEN)

LIGHTWEIGHTS

Champ: Paul Spadafora (USA)
1. Angel Manfredy (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Juan Lazcano (USA)
4. Victoriano Damian Sosa (DR)
5. Julio Diaz (USA)
6. Efren Hinojosa (USA)
7. Edson Xuxa Nascimento (BRA)
8. Steve Johnston (USA)
9. Dennis Holbaek (DEN)
10. Juan Gomez-Trinidad (PR)
11. Stefano Zoff (ITA)
12. Michael Clark (USA)

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS

Champ: Steve Forbes (USA)
1. Lamont Pearson (USA)
2. Vacant
3. David Santos (USA)
4. Ernesto Zepeda (MEX)
5. Jesus Chavez (USA)
6. John Brown (USA)
7. Luis Lizarraga (USA)
8. Philip Ndou (SA)
9. Carlos Hernandez (USA)
10. Alejandro Gonzalez (MEX)
11. Daniel Attah (NIG)
12. Juan Arias (USA)

FEATHERWEIGHTS

Champ: Frankie Toledo (USA)
1. Manuel Medina (MEX)
2. Victor Polo (COL)
3. Robbie Peden (AUSTRL)
4. Augie Sanchez (USA)
5. Juan Manuel Marquez (MEX)
6. David Toledo (USA)
7. Naseem Hamed (GB)
8. Oscar Larios (MEX)
9. Mbulelo Botile (SA)
10. Istvan Kovacs (HUN)
11. Mbulelo Botile (SA)
12. Carlos Navarro (USA)

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS

Champ: Manny Pacquaio (PHIL)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. F. Rakkiatgym (INDO)
4. Salim Medjkoune (FRA)
5. Lehlo Ledwaba (SA)
6. Fahsung 3K-Battery (THAI)
7. Jose Luis Valbuena (ARG)
8. Enrique Sanchez (MEX)
9. Fernando Velardez (USA)
10. Bones Adams (USA)
11. Vladislav Antonov (RUS)
12. David Donis (USA)

BANTAMWEIGHTS

Champ: Tim Austin (USA)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Pete Frissina (USA)
4. Rafael Marquez (MEX)
5. Ratanachai Vorapin (THAI)
6. Johnny Bredahl (DEN)
7. Adan Vargas (MEX)
8. Juan Cordoba (ARG)
9. Mark Johnson (USA)
10. Diego Morales (MEX)
11. Johnny Tapia (USA)
12. Steve Dotse (GHA)

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS

Champ: Felix Machado (VEN)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Martin Castillo (MEX)
4. Vernie Torres (USA)
5. Saen Sow Ploenchit (THAI)
6. Adonis Rivas (NIC)
7. Luis Bolanos (COL)
8. Jesus Rojas (VEN)
9. Mauricio Pastrana (COL)
10. Juan Marquez (MEX)
11. Joel Luna (MEX)
12. Samson 3K-Battery (THAI)

FLYWEIGHTS

Champ: Irene Pacheco (COL)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Mike Trejo (USA)
4. Hawk Makepula (SA)
5. Hussein Hussein (LEB)
6. Alex Ali Baba (GHA)
7. Alejandro Montiel (MEX)
8. Alexander Mahmutov (RUS)
9. David Guerault (FRA)
10. Damaen Kelly (GB)
11. Angel Priolo (COL)
12. Jason Booth (GB)

JR. FLYWEIGHTS

Champ: Ricardo Lopez (MEX)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Noel Tunacao (PHIL)
4. Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)
5. Wandee Chareon (THAI)
6. Juan Keb Baas (MEX)
7. Zolani Petelo (SA)
8. Saman Sorjaturong (THAI)
9. Bebis Mendoza (COL)
10. Hidenobu Honda (JAP)
11. Fahlan Sakreerin (THAI)
12. Anis Roga (INDO)

MINI FLYWEIGHTS

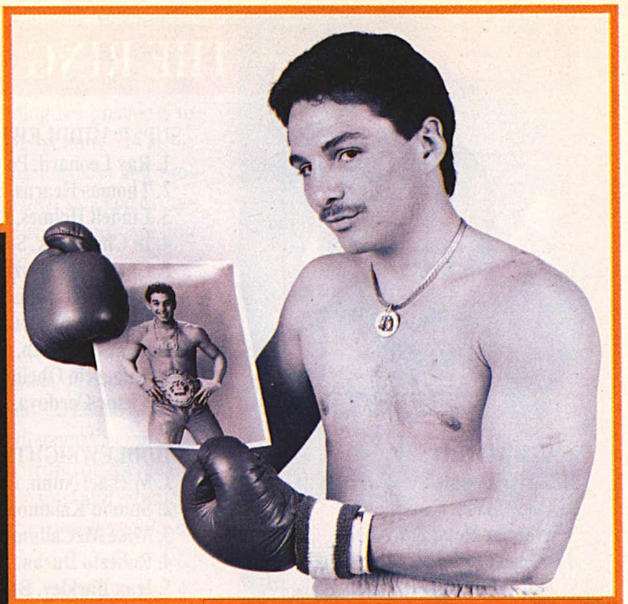
Champ: Roberto Leyva (MEX)
1. Vacant
2. Miguel Barrera (MEX)
3. Daniel Reyes (COL)
4. Joma Gamboa (PHIL)
5. Hiroshi Matsumoto (JAP)
6. Hiroshi Nakajima (JAP)
7. Ernesto Rubillar (PHIL)
8. Mohamed Rachman (INDO)
9. Yasuo Tokimitsu (JAP)
10. Surachai Saengmorokot (THAI)
11. Jaeho Kim (KOR)
12. Noel Arambulet (VEN)

That's Entertainment!?!

CAMACHO, PAZ, AND ALL THAT JAZZ

By Jeff Ryan

Putting junior welterweights Vinny Pazienza and Hector Camacho together created nonstop action—and the fight wasn't bad, either. Their eight-city publicity tour featured a press conference punchout, a sanitary napkin used as a weapon, and a strip show.



In the days leading up to "Put Up Or Shut Up," Pazienza had Camacho on his mind. "The Pazmanian Devil" actually played straight man to Camacho for the most part, but he did present the dance master with a pink tutu at one stop on the publicity tour.

"The Macho Man" made headlines, first by slapping Pazienza's trainer, Kevin Rooney, at a press conference, then by throwing a tampon at Paz after calling him "a bleeder."

Really now, what did we expect from a promotion whose logo was graffiti spray-painted on a brick wall? The Lincoln-Douglas debates? You put Hector Camacho and Vinny Pazienza together, and you get taunting with a tutu, press conference punchouts, a sanitary napkin used as a weapon, a strip show, a discussion of hemorrhoids, some gay activist backlash, and the burp heard 'round the world. Leave it to "Macho" and "Paz" to make us yearn for the days when you could go to Atlantic City and be treated to normal entertainment, like a horse diving off a pier and a guy dressed like a giant peanut shaking hands on the Boardwalk.

That "The Macho Man" and "The Pazmanian Devil" actually managed to squeeze in a fairly entertaining fight—won by Camacho via unanimous 12-round decision—amid all the burlesque is either a testimony to their stamina or evidence that they must have really started to take that back-alley streetfight TV commercial seriously.

For most of the days leading up to "Put Up Or Shut Up," Paz actually played the role of straight man, which ought to tell you something about the ozone layer in which Camacho was residing. The last time Paz wasn't the central shtick figure before a fight was probably way back when he was duking it out during kindergarten recess. It wasn't until third grade, presumably, that he started gluing sequins on his lunchbox.

Of course, Paz did have his moments. He presented the dance master with a pink tutu at one stop of the eight-city publicity tour that kicked off an exhausting (for the public) five months of hype. It was Camacho, though, who made headlines, first by slapping Pazienza's trainer, Kevin Rooney, at a press conference (in the scuffle, Paz' promoter, Dan Duva, suffered a knee injury that required surgery), then by throwing a sanitary napkin at Paz after calling him "a bleeder."

Funny, though, how some guys never manage to get into trouble. It was Pazienza who got his pointed devil's tail in hot water for his prefight actions, namely telling Camacho at the end of the TV commercial to leave his "sissy clothes" at home.

"Some gay activists called to complain about that," Paz explained. And, naturally, when a guy who calls himself The Devil sees a fire, he fans the flames. "At the next press conference I said, 'I got nothing against gay people. If I offended anybody [his voice turns girlish], oh, I'm very, very sorry.'"

Pazienza made no such attempt to go out of his way to rile the hyperactive Camacho. He didn't have to.

"This whole thing was a phony grudge to begin with," Camacho said a few days before battle. "I didn't know Pazienza at all. But now, I'm getting mad, because Rooney and Duva are trying to promote Pazienza as the better fighter. Who's he ever beat? Pazienza is a Macho Camacho wanna-be."

"He's a stupid little schizophrenic sucker," countered Paz, ever the master of understatement.

On fight night, the tension was so thick you could cut it with a switchblade. The mood was pure Ringling Brothers, with aging Convention Hall jammed with a crazed legion of Pazmaniacs, many of whom made the trip from Rhode Island. That went a long way toward explaining the deafening cheers that greeted Paz' every punch. It also went a long way toward explaining the two-beer maximum at Convention Hall's concession stands.

Camacho actually inflamed passions an hour before the fight, breaking with convention (and how many times did he do that before, during, and after this bout?) by climbing into the ring between preliminaries. Decked out in a long black coat and the three

THE RING RATINGS, April 1990

Azumah Nelson

HEAVYWEIGHTS
1. **Buster Douglas**, Columbus, OH
2. **Mike Tyson**, Catskill, NY
3. **Evander Holyfield**, Atlanta, GA
4. **Michael Dokes**, Las Vegas, NV
5. **Tim Witherspoon**, Philadelphia, PA
6. **Francesco Damiani**, Italy
7. **Orlin Norris**, Campo, CA
8. **Carl Williams**, White Plains, NY
9. **Razor Ruddock**, Canada
10. **Gary Mason**, England

CRUISERWEIGHTS
1. **Carlos DeLeon**, Puerto Rico
2. **Taoufik Belbouli**, France
3. **Robert Daniels**, Miami, FL
4. **Dwight Muhammad Qawi**, Cherry Hill, NJ
5. **Glenn McCrory**, England
6. **Nate Miller**, Philadelphia, PA
7. **Anaclet Wamba**, France
8. **Patrick Lumumba**, Kenya
9. **James Warring**, Miami, FL
10. **Boone Pultz**, Tyler, TX

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
1. **Virgil Hill**, Las Vegas, NV
2. **Prince Charles Williams**, Mansfield, OH
3. **Michael Moorer**, Detroit, MI
4. **Jeff Harding**, Australia
5. **Dennis Andries**, Detroit, MI
6. **Don Lalonde**, Canada
7. **Leslie Stewart**, Trinidad & Tobago
8. **Graciano Rocchigiani**, Germany
9. **Joe Lasisi**, Las Vegas, NV
10. **Eric Nicoletta**, France

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
1. **Ray Leonard**, Potomac, MD
2. **Thomas Hearns**, Las Vegas, NV
3. **Lindell Holmes**, Detroit, MI
4. **In Chul Baek**, South Korea
5. **Christophe Tiozzo**, France
6. **Antoine Byrd**, Los Angeles, CA
7. **Frank Tate**, Houston, TX
8. **James Kinchen**, San Diego, CA
9. **Fulgencio Obelmejias**, Venezuela
10. **Victor Cordova**, Panama

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
1. **Michael Nunn**, Los Angeles, CA
2. **Sumbu Kalambay**, Italy
3. **Mike McCallum**, Brooklyn, NY
4. **Roberto Duran**, Miami, FL
5. **Iran Barkley**, Bronx, NY
6. **Michael Watson**, England
7. **Herol Graham**, England
8. **Nigel Benn**, England
9. **Doug DeWitt**, Yonkers, NY
10. **Steve Collins**, Brockton, MA

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS
1. **Julian Jackson**, Virgin Islands
2. **John Mugabi**, Tampa, FL
3. **Gianfranco Rosi**, Italy
4. **John David Jackson**, Tucson, AZ
5. **Terry Norris**, Campo, CA
6. **Rene Jacquot**, France
7. **Donald Curry**, Fort Worth, TX
8. **Darrin Van Horn**, Lexington, KY
9. **Robert Hines**, Philadelphia, PA
10. **Chris Pyatt**, England

WELTERWEIGHTS
1. **Marlon Starling**, South Windsor, CT
2. **Simon Brown**, Washington, D.C.
3. **Lloyd Honeyghan**, England
4. **Mark Breland**, Brooklyn, NY
5. **Buddy McGirt**, Brentwood, NY
6. **Tyrone Trice**, Detroit, MI
7. **Maurice Blocker**, Washington, D.C.
8. **Glenwood Brown**, Plainfield, NJ
9. **Aaron Davis**, Bronx, NY
10. **Antoine Fernandez**, France

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS
1. **Julio Cesar Chavez**, Mexico
2. **Meldrick Taylor**, Philadelphia, PA
3. **Juan Coggi**, Argentina
4. **Roger Mayweather**, Las Vegas, NV
5. **Hector Camacho**, Big Cypress, FL
6. **Ras-I Bramble**, Hampton Township, NJ
7. **Loreto Garza**, Sacramento, CA
8. **Frankie Randall**, Morristown, TN
9. **Louie Lomeli**, Melrose Park, IL
10. **Sammy Fuentes**, Puerto Rico

LIGHTWEIGHTS
1. **Pernell Whitaker**, Norfolk, VA
2. **Edwin Rosario**, Puerto Rico
3. **Tracy Spann**, Plainfield, NJ
4. **Freddie Pendleton**, Miami, FL
5. **Greg Haugen**, Henderson, NV
6. **John Duplessis**, New Orleans, LA
7. **David Gonzalez**, San Jose, CA
8. **Chil Sung Chun**, South Korea
9. **Poli Diaz**, Spain
10. **Iwao Otomo**, Japan

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS
1. **Azumah Nelson**, Ghana
2. **John-John Molina**, Puerto Rico
3. **Brian Mitchell**, South Africa
4. **Jeff Fenech**, Australia
5. **Tony Lopez**, Sacramento, CA
6. **Genaro Hernandez**, Los Angeles, CA
7. **Bernard Taylor**, Knoxville, TX
8. **Juan LaPorte**, New York, NY
9. **Mario Martinez**, Mexico
10. **Joey Gamache**, Lewiston, ME

FEATHERWEIGHTS
1. **Antonio Esparragoza**, Venezuela
2. **Jeff Fenech**, Australia
3. **Jorge Paez**, Mexico
4. **Louie Espinoza**, Phoenix, AZ
5. **Troy Dorsey**, Dallas, TX
6. **Maurizio Stecca**, Italy
7. **Pee Wee Parker**, Houston, TX
8. **Marcos Villasana**, Mexico
9. **Ricardo Cepeda**, Bronx, NY
10. **Paul Hodkinson**, England

world title belts he has accumulated during his career, he paraded from corner to corner while the Pazmaniacs booed unmercifully.

After a few moments, Camacho appeared ready to retreat to the acoustically safer confines of his dressing room. But just then, ring announcer Michael Buffer walked over and handed him the microphone, proving that, Pazienza's courage on this night notwithstanding, Buffer may have been the bravest guy in the building.

"It's Macho Time!" Camacho screamed. "It's Macho Time!"

No it's not, the roughly 12,000 fans in attendance were probably thinking simultaneously. It's already 10:45. Is the main event gonna start before midnight?!

It would, but just barely. At 11:30, Pazienza, led out of his dressing room by a guy carrying a gorilla doll on the end of a long stick (this night got weirder by the minute), finally came into view. Paz' ring attire was strangely subdued, or at least subdued for a guy who had previously worn a robe illuminated with dozens of Christmas tree lights, and once had a devil's tail dangling from the back of his trunks. For this

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS
1. **Daniel Zaragoza**, Mexico
2. **Jesus Salud**, San Diego, CA
3. **Seung Hoon Lee**, South Korea
4. **Juan Jose Estrada**, Mexico
5. **Fabrice Benichou**, France
6. **Kenny Mitchell**, Houston, TX
7. **Pedro Decima**, Argentina
8. **Paul Banke**, Quail Valley, CA
9. **Jesse Benavides**, Corpus Christi, TX
10. **Jemal Hinton**, District Heights, MD

BANTAMWEIGHTS
1. **Raul Perez**, Mexico
2. **Orlando Canizales**, Laredo, TX
3. **Luisito Espinosa**, Philippines
4. **Gerardo Martinez**, San Jose, CA
5. **Israel Contreras**, Venezuela
6. **Khaokor Galaxy**, Thailand
7. **Wilfredo Vasquez**, Puerto Rico
8. **Pepillo Valdez**, Mexico
9. **Hurley Snead**, Detroit, MI
10. **Billy Hardy**, England

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS
1. **Khaosai Galaxy**, Thailand
2. **Moon Sung Kil**, South Korea
3. **Nana Konadu**, Ghana
4. **Gilberto Roman**, Mexico
5. **Jose Ruiz**, Puerto Rico
6. **Juan Polo**, Colombia
7. **Thanomsak Sithbaobey**, Thailand
8. **Elly Pical**, Indonesia
9. **Robert Quiroga**, San Antonio, TX
10. **Yong Heun Lee**, South Korea

FLYWEIGHTS
1. **Sot Chitalada**, Thailand
2. **Jesus Rojas**, Venezuela
3. **Dave McAuley**, Ireland
4. **Jung Koo Chang**, South Korea
5. **Javier Lucas**, Mexico
6. **Richard Clarke**, Jamaica
7. **Leopard Tamakuma**, Japan
8. **Yul Woo Lee**, South Korea
9. **Romy Navarette**, Philippines
10. **Yong Kang Kim**, South Korea

bout, he wore plain black and white, though he did have the words "Kick Ass" embroidered in a big red heart on his trunks and robe.

Ah, the Valentine's Day touch.

Camacho war-danced his way into the ring in buckskin trunks, fringed moccasins, and an Indian headdress, the intention being to ruffle his own feathers, instead of someone else's, for a change. Actually, the Indian motif had been established the day before, when Macho made like Running Bare at the weigh-in. After proclaiming his greatness to anyone who'd listen, and spouting off in his usual stream of semiconsciousness and broken sentences, Camacho then shocked everyone by climbing on the scale and dangling more than just a participle.

"I've got a surprise," he said, announcing his intention to weigh in buck-naked, and warning the women in attendance that they could either turn their heads or experience a real treat. While Duva and Camacho's friend and confidant, Patrick Flannery, scrambled for a jacket to hold in front of the scale, Camacho dropped his pants and giggled. Suffice to say, it was the strongest fashion statement of his career.

(Oh, in case you're wondering, Paz showed up for the weigh-in in your basic skull-and-crossbones boxer shorts. "Christmas gift from my sister," he explained sheepishly.)

As for Camacho's ring statement, that was his strongest in four years, or since that fateful night in 1986 when an Edwin Rosario left hook turned Camacho from one of boxing's most exciting performers into one of its dullest. "Put Up Or Shut Up" was, after all, expected to be the fancy dancer against the brawling bleeder, kind of like Paula Abdul meets Abdullah the Butcher. Before the bout, Pazienza told reporters that he'd hired Carl Lewis and Florence Griffith-Joyner as sparring part-

Camacho opted for the Indian motif, war-dancing his way into the ring in buckskin trunks. Macho Man transformed into Running Bare at the weigh-in, warning women to turn their heads or they'd be in for a real treat when he climbed on the scale in his birthday suit.

When the opening bell sounded an odd thing happened: Camacho stood flatfooted and fought against the straight-ahead charges of Pazienza.

Slick southpaw Camacho kept a safe distance from the hard-driving Pazienza by landing the jab. Macho controlled the first three rounds, even wobbling the granite-jawed Paz in the second. By the end of round three, Paz' nose was dripping blood.

The fight turned sloppy and dirty in the final five rounds. Referee Tony Perez allowed Pazienza to toss elbows and low blows with abandon, and permitted Camacho to grab his rival around the neck and hold his head down whenever Paz got close. "The referee absolutely sucked," said Paz.

ners, and in the wake of Camacho's dreadful track meets against Cornelius Boza-Edwards, Reyes Cruz, and Ray Mancini, we weren't so sure that he was kidding.

Once the opening bell sounded, however, an odd thing happened: Camacho stood flatfooted and fought. (Quick, somebody check the boy's pulse!) Against the straight-ahead charges of Pazienza, it was the ideal strategy. Driving home a crisp, straight left each time Paz lunged in, Camacho controlled the first three rounds, even wobbling his granite-jawed foe in the second. By the end of round three, Paz' nose was dripping blood.

But Pazienza, no Devil dog, never stopped coming forward. In the fourth he decided to turn what had been a boxing match into the kind of back-alley brawl those TV commercials had promised. Paz scored with both hands to the body, crashed a right to the head, and took every opportunity to bodyblock the New Yorker against a turnbuckle. Camacho rebounded to win the sixth, but Paz turned mugger again in the seventh, and after the round, he screamed, and raised his arms overhead in triumph.

The momentum alternated in the final five rounds, but by then the fight had turned about as sloppy and dirty as a battle with gloves and a rulebook could be. Referee Tony Perez allowed Pazienza to toss elbows and low blows with abandon, and permitted Camacho to grab his rival around the neck and hold his head down whenever Paz got close.

Said the always-eloquent Paz, "The referee absolutely sucked."

A slashing Camacho right cross opened a cut above Pazienza's left eye in the ninth, but to his discredit, the Macho Man failed to take the offensive and seek a stoppage. Instead, Running Bare developed injun trouble, and spent most of the last three rounds jabbing and retreating to the ropes. Paz charged in repeatedly, ripping punches to the body, and sending the crowd into a frenzy.

Though behind on the cards (he'd also had a point deducted in round 11 for butting Camacho on the ropes), a fired-up Paz actually pounded himself in the face midway through the final round. The combination scored points (for whom, we don't know), and no, wiseguys, Paz didn't get cut.

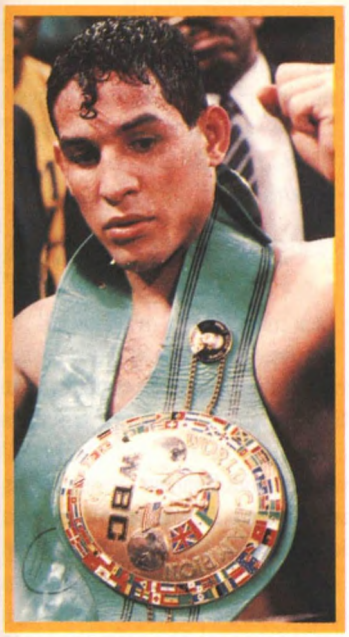
The decision was unanimous, but not surprisingly, there was a disparity in the scoring. Richard Murry had Camacho ahead 119-109, John Rupert had it 115-112, and Jose Antonio Salsedo tabbed it a 117-116 squeaker. The Ring scored for Camacho, 115-113.

"I'm not all the way back, but this is the best I've looked in a long, long time," Camacho said afterward. "I'm at the peak again, but I've got to fight consistent. I'm very proud of my performance. I did everything right."

Never one to lull a crowd of reporters into a stupor with a cliché-ridden diatribe, Camacho instead provided some enlightening information on his methods of making the 140-pound limit. "I took so many suppositories that I thought I was gonna get hemorrhoids," he said. He then turned the microphone over to Flannery, a self-proclaimed "actor, bon vivant, stuntman, raconteur, and philosopher," and the only character in Macho's camp who can challenge the boss in the Excess Verbiage Sweepstakes.

"All the credit in the world goes to Hector's trainer, Rudy Mata," Flannery said, while nearly hyperventilating. "Where's Rudy? Is he here? Hi-ho, Silver! RUDY MATA! I told my wife if I ever quit her, I'm going with Rudy ... The Pazienza family, oh, they're beautiful people. Did you ever see an Italian who

Camacho turned into his usual, fan-unfriendly self the last three rounds, jabbing and retreating to the ropes. Paz charged in repeatedly, ripping punches to the body, and sending the crowd into a frenzy.



After winning by unanimous decision, Camacho enlightened the gathered press corps on his method of making the 140-pound limit. "I took so many suppositories that I thought I was gonna get hemorrhoids," Camacho said.

couldn't fight? Vinny's so tough—God, if I had that toughness, oooh, I could rule the world!" Easy there, Patrick.

Camacho then took back the microphone and announced, "I wanna go get laid." But before he left, he brought up the possibility of a rematch with Pazienza. He also brought up the likeliness of a mismatch with admitted drug user Aaron Pryor, who has undergone surgery for various eye problems. And he even brought up the idea of facing Mancini again. Then, he brought up his dinner.

"I got something for all the critics," he declared, before leaning forward and belching into the microphone. "See you later."

With that, the victor was gone, denying the press the one final moment it had been hoping for: Camacho, Rooney, and Lou Duva reunited on the podium again. At one point during the prefight hype, Camacho concluded that Duva, Pazienza's manager, bore a strong resemblance to Fred Flintstone, and that Rooney could pass for Barney Rubble. Macho thus took to yelling, "Yabba dabba doo" whenever he was in their presence.

"And you," Fred, uh, Lou, finally countered one day, "fight like Wilma."

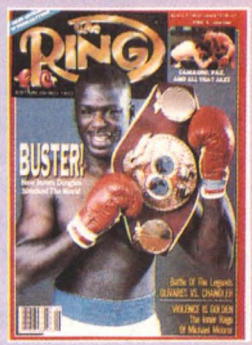
Though the Fred, Barney, and Wilma trio would have no doubt made for some colorful postfight verbal sparring, most of the postfight attention focused on Dino—the Duva, not the dinosaur. In yet one more bizarre sidelight to one of the most bizarre boxing events in many years, Dino, Lou's son, was led away in handcuffs by police when he became embroiled in a dressing room battle. This main event featured Rooney and two process servers who tried to issue the trainer a summons while he tended to the vanquished Pazienza.

Rooney later explained that he owed some money to the IRS and had a gambling debt at Atlantic City's Trump Plaza hotel. "I blame Kevin Rooney, first and foremost," he said. After Trump officials interceded, Dino was released from the cuffs. But Rooney's lawyer, Margaret Stanton, remained incensed at the insensitive timing of the serving of the papers, the equivalent of approaching John Elway after the Super Bowl and asking if he'd like to do a public service ad demonstrating the Heimlich maneuver.

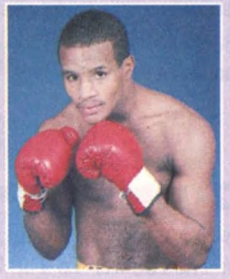
"These things are done very discreetly," Stanton said. "It doesn't have to be done in a circus atmosphere."

That's true. It could have been done at some moment either before, during, or after Paz-Camacho, when there wasn't a circus atmosphere surrounding the participants. Just one thing, though, Margaret. Do you remember one? ■

THE RING, June 1990



The Cover: James "Buster" Douglas shocked the world with his 10th-round knockout of Mike Tyson in Tokyo, Japan. Douglas, the son of former middleweight and light heavyweight contender Billy Douglas, had long been considered an underachiever. Though gifted with exceptional speed and coordination, Douglas lacked the fighting heart of his father. But that changed for one night, and boxing history was made.



Silence Before Violence: Some fighters like to holler "It's Macho Time!" during their prefight preparation. Others, like Michael Moorer, used a more serene approach, showing calm on the outside, while broiling on the inside. Moorer's penchant for violence helped him climb up the light heavyweight ranks in the early-1990s.

Bantam Battle: Boxing insiders Don Chargin, Bob Yalen, and Jackie McCoy were asked what they thought would happen if bantamweight legends Jeff Chandler and Ruben Olivares (pictured, vs. Chico Castillo) ever fought. All three came to the conclusion that Olivares would have won, using his superior work rate to wear down Chandler.

Excuses, Excuses: Ever see a world-class boxer lose a fight and not have some sorted explanation as to why? In the late-1980s, Mike Tyson's opponents almost always did. Trevor Berbick (pictured vs. Iron Mike) claimed he had a breathing problem. Tony Tucker claimed he had a broken right hand when he went into his fight with Tyson. Iron Mike himself claimed to have been victimized by a long count after his loss to Buster Douglas.

Fighter Of The Month: Who else could it have been, but Buster Douglas? He rose from an eighth-round knockdown to hand Mike Tyson, thought to be unbeatable at the time, his first defeat. Two rounds after picking himself up off the canvas, Douglas pinned a weary Tyson on the ropes and delivered the payoff blow.

COME OUT WRITING

Letters may be edited for reasons of space and clarity. Send your comments to Come Out Writing, The Ring, P.O. Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034. Or e-mail letters to comeoutwriting@yahoo.com. E-mailed letters will include the writer's e-mail address unless a city and state of origin is provided.

LOVIN' LENNOX

I just got back from Las Vegas and I am still buzzing about the shot that Lennox Lewis threw and smashed into Hasim Rahman's face. I don't think there are many heavyweights in history, if any, who could have held their own against Lewis that night.

Lewis' performances against Razor Ruddock, Andrew Golota, and now with Rahman are as good as any heavyweight could produce in the whole history of the fight game. I don't think anyone can argue Lewis should eventually be alongside Jack Johnson, Joe Louis, Rocky Marciano, Muhammad Ali, Larry Holmes, and Evander Holyfield in the Hall of Fame.

I can't wait for Lewis-Mike Tyson. Thanks for a great night, Lennox.

MUHAMMAD ALI-FETEH KHAN
Ilford, England

DIGGING UP GRAVES

It was a great pleasure to read the article by Pete Ehrmann entitled, "'40s Featherweight Jackie Graves: The Answer To The Ultimate Willie Pep Trivia Question!" that appeared in the December 2001 issue of THE RING. I was born and raised in North St. Paul, Minnesota, and I remember listening on the radio in 1938 when Joe Louis knocked out Max Schmeling, but it was in the early-1940s that I first started hearing about a terrific young fighter from Austin, Minnesota, named Jackie Graves.

I also remember the Graves-Willie Pep fight very well. How I wanted Graves to win that fight. Pep was a boxing marvel, so difficult to hit, yet I recall Graves landing his best punch in the first round against Pep. It was a good solid bodyshot that got Willie's attention. After that, it was a very bad evening for Graves. As far as Pep winning the third round without ever throwing a punch, it is not an old wives' tail.

I left North St. Paul in 1947 and joined the Army in '48, so I lost track of Jackie Graves. But I still have friends in North St. Paul, and my wife and I usually go back to the old hometown each year. This year, I intend to drive to Austin and try to have a visit with Jackie Graves. Anyway, thanks for the memories, Jackie.

IRVIN FOSS
Marysville, WA

PHOTO BY MATTHEW STOCKMAN/ALLSPORT

Lennox Lewis proved he belongs atop the heavyweight heap by crushing Hasim Rahman. Reader Muhammad Ali-Feteh Khan says that Lewis' victories over Rahman, Andrew Golota, and Razor Ruddock are as good as any heavyweight in history could have done against those men.

HAPPY FOR HOPKINS

The recent domination of Felix "Tito" Trinidad by the skilled fists of Bernard "The Executioner" Hopkins was brilliant, to say the least. I personally attended this fight at Madison Square Garden and felt honored to have witnessed the true greatness of Hopkins.

It was truly one-sided, as Bernard proved to be stronger, quicker, smarter, and more elusive than Tito. Now more than ever we true boxing fans know that Bernard Hopkins is the best pound-for-pound fighter on the planet. With his well-earned victory,

Hopkins certainly deserves Fighter of the Year honors. Furthermore, Hopkins' longtime trainer, Bouie Fisher, deserves Trainer of the Year honors.

CHARLES L. WYNN SR.
Brooklyn, NY

A TOUGH TOPIC TO HANDLE

Because I'm a busy man, it took me quite a while to read the December issue of THE RING. But time and time as I picked it up, I glanced over William Dettloff's story, "Death In The Ring." I gladly admit, it made me uncomfortable, and part of me just didn't want to read it. But when I finally did, it turned out to be among the greatest pieces of boxing writing I've ever read. I agree wholly with Dettloff's conclusion that we follow the sport because of the fighters, because they're better than the rest of us, and as such, deserve more recognition.

FINBARR O'KEEFE
Ashford, England

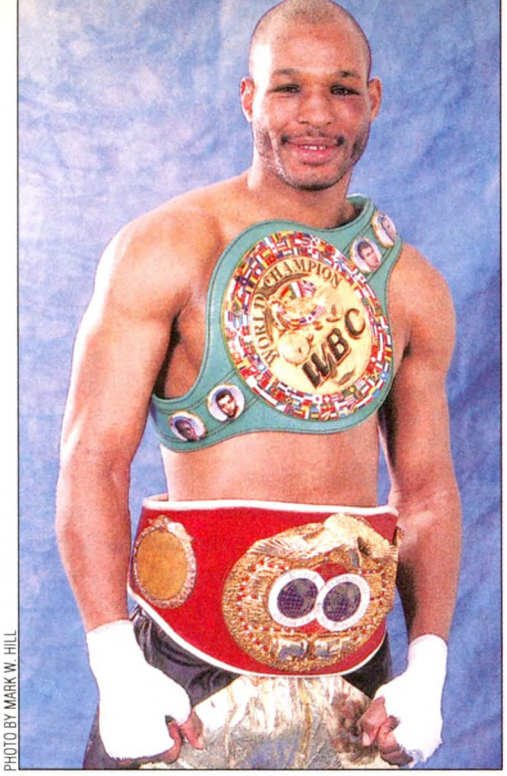


PHOTO BY MARK W. HILL

Bernard Hopkins surprised the world by annihilating Felix Trinidad. Reader Charles L. Wynn Sr. thinks that Hopkins' victory assures him Fighter of the Year status.

FORGET ROY

It's bad enough that we were subjected to nearly a half-decade's worth of wasted articles analyzing Jones' next move, but I find it incomprehensible that you writers are wasting our time again with stories like "The Rap On Roy" in the December issue of THE RING, exploring Jones' convoluted thinking. Has it ever occurred to you ringside psychologists that maybe Jones is just another nut? In the ring, he hasn't logged a meaningful performance in the better part of a decade. His perceived ring dominance is owed more to cautious matchmaking.

Let's stop sugarcoating the truth about this guy. Plain and simple, Roy Jones is nothing more than a cowardly, protected HBO house fighter who shamelessly slinks away from tough opponents.

JOHN BAROUGH
Cedar Rapids, IA

DID JUDAH GET JOBBED?

I think Zab Judah should have received a full count from referee Jay Nady after Kostya Tszyu knocked Judah down in the closing seconds of round two of their bout for the undisputed junior welterweight title. If Judah got a count and a minute's rest after round two, would he have recovered in time for round three? Or would Tszyu's punching power have been too much for Judah to handle? Since this fight ended prematurely, in my opinion, those are things we will never know.

JUSTIN HOPEY
Madbury, NH

CATCH A RISING STAR

I had never heard of Ricky Hatton before I read the "New Faces" article in the January '02 issue of THE RING. Then, I had the opportunity to see him for myself in an October 27, 2001, match against veteran Freddie Pendleton. The article had described Hatton as an explosive, stalking-type fighter and a vicious bodypuncher. Man, is that the truth. This kid is exciting!

Although Pendleton is on his way out, and Hatton's star is steadily rising, it was still an impressive performance. This rookie had the veteran completely outclassed. The electrifying knockout came in the second round, with a deadly left hook to the body that left Pendleton rolling around on the canvas in agony for several minutes.

I am looking for this talented prospect to do some things in the future. Many insiders believe he'll be fighting for a title by next year.

BRIAN WAGNER
Green Brook, NJ

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

I'm aware of your dedication to accuracy in reporting boxing news and fight results, so I want to call your attention to an error in the February 2002 edition of THE RING. In providing the scoring of the Byron Mitchell-Manuel Siaca fight in the "Ringside Reports" section, you have me voting for Siaca, 115-112, when in fact I scored the fight for Mitchell, 114-112, the same as Ove Ovesen. Guy Jutras was the judge who scored the fight 115-112 for Siaca, creating the split decision. Ordinarily, I would let the matter ride without comment, but the great majority of people, as well as THE RING, thought Mitchell won the fight, as I did, and I want your many readers to be aware of how I actually scored the fight.

TOM KACZMAREK
Brick, NJ ■

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Easy victories like Roy Jones' over Ricky Frazier have alienated fans like John Barough, who calls Jones "nothing more than a cowardly, protected HBO house fighter who shamelessly slinks away from tough opponents."

LOOKING AHEAD

By Eric Raskin

TOP RANK'S GOLDEN OUTLOOK

Arum: Top Rank could live up to its name in 2002

Promoter **Bob Arum** admits that 2001 was not the best year his company, Top Rank, has ever had. Arum and **Don King** have been known for years as the "Big Two" of boxing promotion, but in 2001, it looked more like just the "Big One," with King in control of most of the sport's biggest events and Arum slipping back toward the rest of the pack. Still, Arum says that as far as the bottom line is concerned, everything was just fine at Top Rank last year.

"Everybody in the office got paid, and at the end of the year, we made money, so who's to complain?" Arum said. "Sure, we've had better years. Some years, you make more than others. But we did well, and hopefully, 2002 will be better."

By all indications, it will be better—maybe a lot better. The main reason Top Rank didn't rank at the top in '01 was that it was Arum's first year in a decade without **Oscar De La Hoya** generating revenue for him, but that won't be the case in '02, as "The Golden Boy" is back in the fold. De La Hoya's experiment with relatively inexperienced promoter **Jerry Perenchio** is over, and if all goes according to plan, he'll be back in the superfight business on May 4 against **Fernando Vargas**.

"Vargas is playing hardball in the negotiations," said Arum in early-December, "but I believe the fight will get done. Everything is back to the way it was in my relationship with Oscar, and this should be a very big year for him."

But Arum is not dependent solely on De La Hoya. Top Rank has a fantastic lineup of fights involving their next tier of stars crammed into a one-month stretch from February 23 to March 23. It kicks off with a pair of rematches on HBO, **Paulie Ayala-Bones Adams** II and **Rafael Marquez-Mark Johnson** II, followed by the huge pay-per-view rematch the next Saturday, March 2, between **Marco Antonio Barrera** and **Erik Morales**. Two weeks later, on March 16, Top Rank has scheduled a tremendous blood-and-guts doubleheader on Showtime, with **Yory Boy Campas** meeting **Daniel Santos** at 154 pounds, and **Antonio Diaz** facing **Antonio Margarito** at 147. The busy spell wraps up the next Saturday, March 23, with **Floyd Mayweather** moving to lightweight, probably to challenge WBC titleholder **Jose Luis Castillo**.

"Then we'll pretty much be taking April off to get ready for De La Hoya-Vargas," Arum said.

All the while, Top Rank will keep doing minor shows on Telefutura, Univision's spinoff network. Although Arum no longer has a monopoly on the Spanish-language network's dates—Main Events will be taking 10 of them—Top Rank still has 31 broadcasts in '02, and Arum is excited about the switch from Sunday afternoon to Friday night to benefit the West Coast audience.

All in all, it looks like Arum should be right back, shoulder-to-shoulder with King in 2002, though the Hall of Fame Top Rank boss is cautious with his optimism.

"I've been in this business for 35 years," Arum said, "and I know better than to count my chickens before they've hatched. But there is the potential here for 2002 to be an excellent year for our company."

LISTEN UP

Rahman: Ready to rock again ■

Former heavyweight champ **Hasim Rahman** said shortly after his rematch with **Lennox Lewis** that he wanted to return to the ring by February or March to begin his quest for a second world title … Showtime has an interesting heavyweight bout lined up for February 16, pitting comebacking former champion **Michael Moorer** against capable former Olympian **Lawrence Clay-Bey** … Undisputed junior welter champ **Kostya Tszyu** is penciled in to return March 30. The opponent was still undetermined as of press time.

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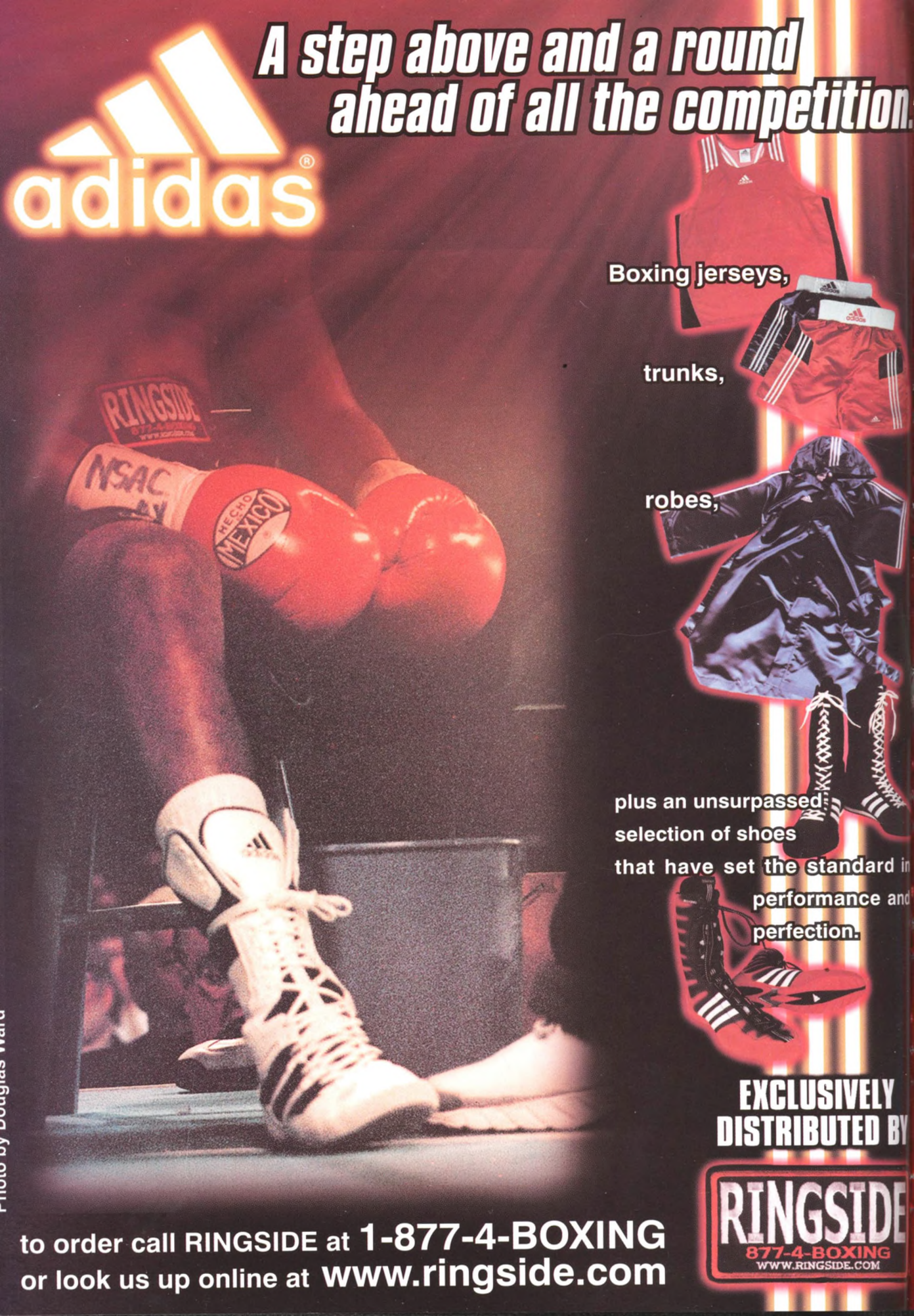

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